

**BACHES IN THE LANDSCAPE AND THEIR  
CONTESTED RECOGNITION AS HERITAGE**

**Case studies of Heritage Landscapes at Taylors Mistake and  
on Rangitoto Island**

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Recognition as Heritage:  
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on Rangitoto Island**

**by R. J. S. Foster**

This dissertation explores how and why New Zealand vernacular holiday cottages known as baches or cribs have come to be recognised as heritage, although what constitutes the heritage of the bach is vigorously contested. Baches typically formed small settlements around the coast and lakes, and along rivers, on both public land and in small subdivisions. This created distinctive bach landscapes in a number of places including Taylors Mistake near Christchurch and Rangitoto Island just offshore of Auckland.

Studies of the physical aspects of these landscapes, what it was like to dwell at the beach, how they have been represented in popular media and a history of the official responses to the bach are used to situate the controversies over heritage recognition at Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island.

The approaches to heritage in these case studies are analysed in relation to three intellectual perspectives on heritage; fine arts, humanities and the holistic environmental perspectives. It is argued that assessments of the baches are predominantly from a fine arts perspective that systematically fails to recognise bach heritage. The humanities perspective corrects some of the omissions but it is concluded that only a holistic environmental perspective is capable of incorporating recent understandings of the dwelt and imagined aspects of heritage landscapes.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction –

### 1.1 Why Study the Bach/Crib

Baches, and their lower South Island equivalent the crib, are small, vernacular, owner-built holiday cottages and shacks that were built along New Zealand's coastlines, lakes and rivers, primarily for fishing hunting and swimming. Bach building occurred in several phases, starting in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but particularly in the 1920s and 1950s. They often form small settlements of between ten and a hundred or so baches, on both public and private land, creating distinctive landscapes. There are strong similarities with holiday cottages in other countries, but the bach seems to have acquired a unique status. (See fig 1)

This dissertation sets out to explore why such humble vernacular buildings have started to acquire heritage status in New Zealand and how that heritage might be related to the landscapes they occur in. Heritage is a contested concept, and whether bach landscapes constitute a heritage worth

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Fig.1 Early Taylors Mistake (Cairns and Turpin 1991)

retaining, and in what form, is widely disputed. Some of the possible reasons why the bach is acquiring heritage status may relate primarily to the nature of heritage, or be more particular to the bach. Samuel (1994) notes that an extraordinary range of objects has become open to heritage celebration, so it may not be too surprising if vernacular holiday shacks in other countries also receive heritage recognition. Alternatively, in a country that's recently settled (at least by Pakeha) buildings that are 80 or 90 years old become significant components of Pakeha heritage, in a way that they wouldn't in a country with thousands of years of human history. This may be particularly so as depletion increases the value of those remaining. Many on private land have been remodelled, enveloped or just plain flattened to make way for holiday houses.



Paradoxically it may be their relative ubiquity, in relation to population, that has allowed more people to experience a bach holiday than in other countries. This collective experience of the bach, especially childhood memories, has created a nostalgic fondness, which may connect with a national admiration for the bach's ingenuity and egalitarian qualities (Macdonald 2002). Baches also occur in particular places, which locate their social history, and may create familiar landscapes.

The idea that the bach is an important part of New Zealand's social history, and should be preserved as heritage is not, however, universally shared. For some people, the bach represents a shabby legacy of frontier settlement, which has destroyed the pristine natural environment of the coast, and denigrates the heritage of coastal access prescribed by the Queen's Chain.

Arguments for and against the bach are highlighted by controversies over what should happen to the baches on public land at Taylors Mistake and on Rangitoto Island. (See fig 2)

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Fig 2 Pelham Pool, Rangitoto Island. (Yoffe 2000)

Both places developed distinctive bach cultures, particularly from 1920 onwards, but their histories have diverged, after initial acceptance by local authorities. Government departments have subsequently administered the Rangitoto baches, where building was stopped in 1937 and sixty per cent of the baches were demolished in the 1960s and 1970s. The Department of Conservation placed on moratorium on removal in 1991, while it assessed what to do with the baches in the face of a public campaign to save the remaining baches for their heritage values. Two local authorities have administered Taylors Mistake, issuing leases until the 1970s, when a final 10-year lease proposed removal by 1986. A series of hearings and referrals to the Environment Court have followed, where their heritage value was proposed as a main reason for their retention.

These arguments have occurred within a broader social and environmental history in New Zealand, which celebrates both ingenuity and the pristine natural environment. They have also been about baches in particular places and landscapes. This dissertation attempts to situate these bach disputes in their temporal and spatial landscapes and provide a broader understanding of the development of the concept of heritage landscapes, and bach culture in New Zealand.

## **1.2 Research Methods and Objectives**

As mentioned in the acknowledgements this study is a small part of a larger study looking at the management of contested landscape. This study has benefited from several years of fieldwork, which while not all directly related to baches, has helped to shape my understanding of this subject. It has also meant that an eclectic mix of methods have contributed to this work. These include literature survey, participant observation of City Plan and Environmental Court hearings, and formal interviews, and informal discussions with those involved in the hearings.

The literature review attempted to track down as much of the literature about baches in New Zealand, as well as their overseas equivalents, as possible. This included newspaper searches for articles or letters about bach settlements or baches. This literature was analysed for evidence of where and how bach settlement occurred, memories of dwelling at the bach and themes of how the bach has now been represented and official responses to the bach.

Participant observation was undertaken of both the 1998 Taylors Mistake City Plan hearing (Marquet 1998) and the 2001 Environment Court case *Save the Bays and Ors vs Christchurch City Council and Ors*. Evidence from these hearings and the earlier hearing (Guthrie 1993) was analysed for its approaches to heritage and forms the bulk of Chapter Seven.

Nine formal semi structured interviews with key participants in these hearing were undertaken between 1999 and early 2001. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed but they do not form a large part of this dissertation. I have used only two quotes from these interviews to highlight particular points of view rather than analysing them for general themes.

Respondents signed consent forms for this earlier study and I have endeavoured to keep all private conversations and interview material confidential but have named evidence when it was presented to one of the hearings.

The first objective of this research focuses on understanding how a humble vernacular building has come to be seen as heritage in New Zealand and what bach heritage means in the context of controversies at Taylors Mistake and on Rangitoto Island. The second objective is to investigate perspectives on heritage management and assessment to see whether they reflect recent thinking about landscape that might provide for better understandings of heritage landscapes.

### **1.3 Outline of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into four sections; chapter two looks at theory, the next three chapters survey bach landscapes in the light of that theory, chapters six and seven look at official responses to bach settlements, while chapter eight discusses bach landscape heritage and concludes with both theoretical and practical observations about heritage landscapes.

Chapter two outlines a theoretical overview of issues associated with the concepts of landscape, heritage and heritage landscapes and relates them to baches. Evolving theories about the nature of landscape are explored, these include ideas about cultural landscapes, dwelling and representation. Ideas about what should be considered heritage are often highly contested because they are important for individual and group identity. This is particularly apparent when vernacular buildings and landscapes are seen as heritage by some people.

Chapters three, four and five explore bach landscapes in light of the theories about landscape reviewed in the first section of chapter two. Chapter three looks for similarities and differences with overseas equivalents, explores the possible origins of baches and studies where, why and how bach settlements developed.

Chapter four looks at the experience of dwelling in the bach. The possibility of building it yourself, but having to constantly maintain it, often created particular types of community and family relations. The bach also allowed for particular relations with nature and temporal experiences.

Chapter five surveys popular media representations of the bach as egalitarian and indigenous but threatened and also looks at how architects have found the bach both an inspiration and an eyesore.

Chapter six looks at official responses to the bach from initial acceptance, encouragement or ignorance, which then became concerns about environmental impacts, public land occupation, coastal subdivision and public access.

Chapter seven looks at the most recent response to the bach, which is to recognise it as heritage. The administrative and legislative landscapes of heritage are briefly sketched before case studies of approaches to heritage at Taylors Mistake and on Rangitoto Island are outlined.

Chapter eight discusses these approaches in the light of the theory outlined in chapter two and argues that they can be understood as different intellectual perspectives on heritage. The chapter concludes with theoretical and practical implications for the understanding of heritage landscapes.

## **Chapter 2 Theoretical Overview: Landscape, Heritage and Heritage Landscapes**

This chapter introduces the key theoretical ideas of landscape and heritage, which underpin thinking in the rest of the thesis. Most people will have a sense of what these words mean, but it is important to realise that concepts do not have a pre-existing reality, but are given meaning through usage. Conceptual usage of landscape has broadened from dictionary definitions to include social and symbolic usage. The concept of heritage now also has broad, divergent and contested meanings.

### **2.1 The Idea of Landscape**

Any attempt at situating baches in the landscape must first grapple with the competing ways that landscape has been conceptualised. One way of understanding the meaning of a concept is to look at the origins or etymology of the word itself. Landscape has several antecedents; of particular importance are the German *landschaft*, meaning ‘as small administrative unit’ (Jackson 1984:5) or ‘the land controlled by a lord or inhabited by a particular group of people’ (Duncan 1994:316) and the Dutch *landscap* painting tradition which emphasised the appearance of an area (ibid). These meanings have merged to give the contemporary dictionary of ‘the appearance of that portion of land which the eye can view at once’ (Macdonald 1972:739). Popular usage can differ in various countries, however, as Jackson notes, with Americans tending to ‘think that landscape can mean natural scenery only, whereas in England a landscape almost always contains a human element’ (Jackson 1984:5). Popular and expert usage also changes over time in a single country and is deployed to achieve different ends. Swaffield’s (1991) study of landscape meaning in New Zealand suggests there have been multiple meanings from the earliest ideas of panoramas, picture and improved land through to systems, experience and symbol. These meanings could coexist in documents relating to the issue of trees in high country but usage was often associated with particular groups or applications and attempted to secure certain outcomes.

If personal and expert meanings and usage of landscape are slippery, it is perhaps no surprise that academic usage is also complex. Academic studies in human geography utilising the concept of landscape have broadened from the cultural impacts on the physical landscape to discuss its social and symbolic dimensions (Head 2000).

Traditionally the focus of geography and landscape architecture, landscape is also becoming a key concept in anthropology, archaeology and ecology. This suggests that some caution is required when trying to define terms and that any particular approach will only tell a partial story.

### **2.1.1 The Cultural Landscape**

The bach landscape has a resolutely material existence, but it was also created in and by particular circumstances and has come to symbolise a vast array of meanings about New Zealand society. Although it is essential to investigate each of these aspects of the bach landscape it is not possible to completely isolate each aspect, buildings and ideas about buildings and our memories of visits to the bach commingle.

Early studies of the cultural landscape undertaken and influenced by the Berkeley School of human geographers led by Carl Sauer from the 1920s onward focused on the material patterns of the landscape. They 'sought to describe the interrelations between humans and the environment with primary attention given to the human impact on the environment' (Duncan 1994:316). These impacts were traced through regional styles of buildings, fence construction and field patterns, for example. This type of artifactual analysis and cultural history has been criticised for its 'so called "superorganic" view of culture, in which culture is understood as a total package with a life of its own operating at a higher level than the individual' (Head 2000:52).

It is also grounded in a neat distinction between the natural and cultural landscape. There is, however, no longer any broad acceptance that the tabula rasa of a natural landscape on to which culture is inscribed, ever existed (Cosgrove 2000), and that boundaries between culture and nature are naturally given (Cronon 1996). The first argument is of course much easier to sustain in Europe and North America which humans may have inhabited for thousands if not tens of thousands of years. In New Zealand, dates of initial colonisation fluctuate between 600 and 2000 years BP (Head 2000) and have enabled scientists and the public to more easily imagine a return to 'pristine' nature. Head discusses McGlone's argument which suggests that New Zealand was colonised by humans so recently that it is possible to aspire to a pre-human baseline where '...the most important level is the pre-human state about 800

years ago, still within the lifespan of some of the older trees' (Head 2000:103). It may be this ability to imagine a pre human baseline that inspires conservation groups and authorities attempts to remove baches from the coastline.

This suggests that the particular characteristics of a country's environmental history will shape people's reactions to nature, and that culture and nature are entangled in all sorts of meaningful ways. While it is important to study the particularities of the physical landscape, both where and how baches were located and constructed and the types of activities undertaken at them, we cannot read everything from their physical presence. The people, or bach culture, who built them was never a homogenous group, but has varied widely through time and space. The ideas of both those who have dwelt in baches and those opposed to them are informed both by their everyday being-in-the world and by imaginative representations of baches. It is to a consideration of how we are embedded in landscapes through the metaphor of dwelling that we now turn.

### 2.1.2 Dwelling and Landscapes

The philosophy of being-in-the-world or dwelling has a rich intellectual history, which can be traced to the later thinking of Heidegger, but it has been more formally related to landscape by the anthropologist Tim Ingold (Jones and Cloke 2002). Dwelling recognises the embedded and embodied experience of being-in-the world, and challenges Cartesian splits of mind from body and culture from nature. It is contextualised lived practices that create spaces, times, places and landscapes which are 'not so much the object of thoughts as the homeland(s) to our thoughts' (Ingold quoted in Jones and Cloke 2002:82). Dwelling highlights the complexity of people's practical engagement with the landscape and emphasises the dynamic fluidity of places, which are hybrid constructions of culture and nature. Ingold seeks to move beyond what he calls 'the sterile opposition between the naturalistic view of the landscape as a neutral, external backdrop to human activities, and the culturalistic view that every landscape is a particular cognitive or symbolic ordering of space' (2000:189). He argues for a perspective of landscape that is

*constituted as an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have*

*left there something of themselves ... (the landscape) enfolds the lives and times of predecessors who, over the generations have moved around in it and played their part in its formation. To perceive the landscape is therefore to carry out an act of remembrance, and remembering is not so much a matter of calling up an internal image, as of engaging perceptually with an environment that is itself pregnant with the past* (Ingold 2000:189).

Seeing the bach landscape in this way emphasises processes in the landscape, that is the temporal dimensions of landscape rather than its static composition.

*Landscapes change; and change is itself an intrinsic aspect of our experience of landscape. The landscape is a polyrhythmic composition of processes whose pulse varies from the erratic flutter of leaves to the measured drift and clash of tectonic plates. Relative to the human span, the view before us seems composed of fleeting, ephemeral effects which create a patina of transience on apparently stable forms* (Reason 1987 quoted in Ingold 2000:201).

This also has implications for the way we see the bach itself. A bach is not just an object but reflects its ongoing relations with humans and the environment. Not only has it had renovations and additions, but it has also been subject to processes of decay and weathering, rust and borer attack, storms that have blown its roof off, or perhaps undermined its foundations. This suggests difficulties for approaches to heritage that suggest that once it has been protected, a building enters a phase of 'suspended animation' (Salmond 2000).

Every bach is also part of particular place, which has an internal cohesiveness that makes the place distinct from its surroundings. These distinctions can be material or cultural and are usually complex constructions,

*where all manner of elements-people, artefacts, animals, plants, topography, climate, culture, economy and history – are knotted together in an utterly unique way to form unfolding space-time of particular landscapes and places*

Cloke and Jones argue that this approach



*...offers a way to deal with the 'richness' of place where the ecological and the cultural, the human and the non-human, the local and the global, the real and the imaginary all grow together into particular formations in particular places. (2000:163)*

Each bach place or landscape has its own particular history that makes it distinctive, but we can also engage with that place, both through representations of that place, or physically engage with the place, but with our own imaginative geographies affecting that experience. We now turn now to a closer look at issues of representation.

### 2.1.3 Representations and Landscapes

The 'Kiwi As' advertisement for Bushells coffee (See fig 3), for instance, works in relation to a host of other ideas and images, television advertisements set at the bach,



Fig 3 'Kiwi As' Bushells coffee advertisement

television documentaries about the bach, stories about vast real estate prices paid for baches, memories of happy stays at the bach or memories of resentment at not having a bach to stay at. The coffee advertisement is however, attempting to construct a particular story; which might be that we all have happy memories of baches and that coffee and baches are entwined in the continuity of the family. It enhances notions of extended family life, suggesting generations come together at the bach and Bushells has been part of the lives of several generations. But, of course, this is only one of many possible readings.

This situation is also true for the baches themselves, which in some locations have become the sites of heated argument over what should happen to them. Some people have argued, in these situations, that 'social and aesthetic judgements [are] mere projections or reflections of more fundamental political-economic disputes' (Matless 1998:10). At Taylors Mistake for instance, those who want the baches removed argue that bach holders occupy valuable public land, which provides significant rental income. The bachholder's retort is that it is those who most want the baches removed, who will increase the value of their, soon to become, prime waterfront property. While competing claims to valuable land clearly play a role in this dispute, they are constituted here (as elsewhere) 'through considerations of moral and aesthetic as well as monetary value, just as morality and aesthetics never float free of economy' (ibid:12).

Whether the line of baches at Taylors Mistake is called 'Rotten Row' or simply 'The Row' can be seen as an attempt to impose an aesthetic judgement that becomes a potentially important signifier of the bach's future, where each group is attempting to impose their own version of history on the landscape.

A study of the baches must 'consider not just what the landscape "is" or "means" but what it does, how it works as a cultural practice, ...as a vehicle of social and self identity, as a site for the claiming of a cultural authority, as a generator of profit, (and) as a space for different kinds of living' (ibid). Indeed, Taylors Mistake (and many other bach settlements) exemplifies many of these arguments. The bachholders assert their humble origins, and argue their ongoing relationship to the beach as guardians (Cairns and Turpin 1993) has created a significant social history. Those

opposed argue they are merely squatters who have repeatedly broken their promises to vacate their sites, and any heritage resides in the legacy of public access to the coastline, known as the Queens Chain, which the baches interfere with.

As David Matless suggests of a similar group of humble cottages at Potter Heigham in the Norfolk Broads, they defy easy interpretation and their future is even harder to decide or predict.

*What to do with some shacks by a river may at first appear a rather pragmatic and routine matter of everyday land-use regulation, warranting assessment by the relevant environmental expert, but begin to examine the assumptions governing such an assessment and you quickly enter an enormous and complex philosophical and political minefield, concerning rights to land, definitions of pleasure and beauty, claims to authority over the content and form of public and private space. (Matless 1998:12)*

In New Zealand of course, the mines are laid in different places. There is no tradition in New Zealand of right of way across private property, particularly agricultural lands, which is common in Europe (Swaffield 1993). Conversely, access to the coastline is thought by many to have been protected by Queen Victoria's instructions to Governor Hobson in 1840 to set aside 'reserves for the public convenience, utility, health or enjoyment' (in Baldwin 1997:65). That this is largely a myth has done little to diminish the power of the idea, that the Queens Chain provides access to and along all coastlines, rivers wider than 3 metres and lakes larger than 8 hectare, in the public imagination. This is largely because recreation and access groups perpetuate these misinterpretations (Baldwin 1997).

As much as the rest of the dissertation will show, the humble shacks known in New Zealand as baches and cribs have a far wider resonance in New Zealand society than their equivalents in England where 'such structures are seldom considered historic' (Matless 1998:13) and are more likely to be maligned than celebrated.

'New' cultural geographers have approached the way power is symbolically represented and contested in landscapes, in several ways in the 1980s and 1990s. The iconographic approach drawn from art history claimed that,

*[A] landscape is a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolising surroundings. This is not to say that landscapes are immaterial. They may be represented in a variety of materials and in many surfaces – in paint on canvas, in writing on paper in earth, stone, water and vegetation on the ground (Daniels and Cosgrove 1980:1).*

The approach problematised acts of representation, suggesting

*that representations not only reflect reality, but they help to constitute reality. People make sense of their worlds through representations. Some representations are imposed on them from the outside, but these are also contested by representations generated from within the culture. (Duncan 2000:705)*

At Taylors Mistake, both those opposed to baches and those in favour of retaining them use the language of nature conservation. The bach as ‘endangered species’ becomes part of nature, while the conservation of an ‘endangered species’ of penguin is threatened by the continuing existence of baches in Boulder Bay. If these representations hold, (and frequent repetition is one method used by both sides) they help to structure peoples thinking about the issues.

As suggested in the earlier quote visual representation comes under particular scrutiny, images are not innocently selected but chosen for particular purposes. A photo of a car in a field becomes evidence of complicity between the bachholders and the local authority, and supports the case for the removal.

A second approach that deals with the communicative and representational aspects of landscapes considers them as texts, analysing their discursive content with methods drawn from the literary theory, particularly semiotics (Cosgrove 2000). The idea of reading a ‘landscape as text’ foregrounds ideological traces of power, class, gender, and ethnicity, but there are also questions about what this focus omits (Jones and Cloke 2002). Nigel Thrift argues that

*the textualist model of the world which insists on the primacy of representation, systematically exaggerate transience, fragmentation and loss of meaning, consistently over-emphasize systematicity...and downgrade everyday life... The danger is that by so doing they cancel out*

*what is not written down, which tends to be the lives of those who have struggled to get by rather than get on. The point is not that these actors are mutes that then have to be made to speak, it is rather that their practices need to be valued for themselves as the somatic legacy we all live by, with and for (1999:300).*

Jones and Cloke suggest that in studies of landscapes it is important to confront real landscapes, but in ways that are informed by theoretical developments. It is these theoretical developments, within cultural geography, which Ken Taylor suggests, have provided a key impetus for 'the idea of historic cultural landscapes being worthy of heritage conservation action' (1998:371) in Australia. He suggests a number of other possible reasons including, the growth of popular heritage, community interest in history and the flowering of the heritage profession but argues that the interpretation of cultural landscape meanings and as historical documents could not have happened without an intellectual basis (ibid). The recognition of the heritage value of cultural landscapes, particularly pakeha ones, in New Zealand is less developed than in Australia, (Warren-Findlay 2001) but that process is starting to occur in relation to archaeology sites and built heritage precincts (Barber and McLean 2000). Before we look at cultural heritage landscapes, it is necessary to investigate some of the breadth of things that come under the rubric of heritage and suggest reasons why heritage recognition and management are often vigorously contested.

## **2.2 Heritage**

There are a number of questions about heritage that are relevant for this study; how it has been defined, why people feel a need to preserve the past and the impacts that they may have, whose heritage is recognised and how it is interpreted, what the factors are that determines significance and how on-going management should be undertaken.

### **2.2.1 Understanding Heritage**

Heritage is an old word primarily derived from ancestral relationships. The Chambers Dictionary defines it as 'that which is inherited, anything transmitted from ancestors of past ages' (1977:609). Initially it referred to things passed on to one's

children, but it came to include an intellectual and spiritual legacy. As nation-states fought for legitimacy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the concept of 'national heritage' developed, founded on folkways and political ideas, and this contributed to a sense of pride (Davison 1991). The idea of New Zealand as an egalitarian country is one of the founding myths and the idea is often seen as part of 'our' national heritage, but it is also a contentious assertion, which serves to hide those on the margins, particularly Maori and women (Bell 1996).

In the past few decades a more specialised usage of heritage as 'the name we give to those valuable features of our environment which we seek to conserve from the ravages of development and decay' (Davison 1991:1), has become intertwined with these notions of heritage as ideals.

There are a number of reasons offered as to why we should seek to conserve 'those valuable features.' It is often justified in economic terms for its potential to attract tourists, and towns, like Oamaru's attempt to make heritage precincts part of their revitalisation programmes (Trapeznik and McLean 2000). There are, however other reasons, but how they are expressed depends, to a large extent on who the 'we' is. Trapeznik and McLean suggest that 'preserving evidence of the past is central to individual and collective identity and existence for it serves as a central point of reference and contributes to providing life with purpose and meaning' (ibid:17). Pakeha values are often related to particular cultural landscapes which reflect their British past (ibid) whereas the 'Maori view of history and heritage is based on a shared whakapapa (genealogy) in which all things are from the same origin and that the welfare of any part of the environment determines the welfare of the people' (ibid). Maori heritage values are often intangible and connected with wahi tapu (sacred sites), which Pakeha may see as barren and unkempt places. This tension is often highlighted when developments are proposed or undertaken without consideration of Maori heritage values, such as Pegasus Bay or the Waikato motorway. This is, perhaps, also symptomatic of a broader split in society between those who celebrate tradition and those who argue that it stifles innovation, creativity and development (Lowenthal 1985).

### 2.2.2 Ways of Knowing the Past

Our understanding of the past, Lowenthal (1985) suggests, is informed by history, memory and relics but none of these offers an unimpeachable guide to the past. Memory and history are often characterised as opposites (Samuel 1994), and this divide often seems to be ascribed to Maori and Pakeha ways of knowing. In this split, memory is seen as subjective, primitive, instinctual, indulgent and wallowing in its own warmth, whereas history, in principle, was objective, guided by reason and providing empirical proof. Samuel disputes this opposition arguing that ‘history involves a series of erasures, emendations and amalgamations quite similar to those which Freud sets out in his account of “screen memories”... it creates a consecutive narrative out of fragments, imposing order on chaos, and producing images for clearer than any reality could be’ (Samuel 1994:x). Memory on the other hand ‘is an active, shaping force; that is dynamic – what it contrives symptomatically to forget is as important as what it remembers – and that it is dialectically related to historical thought, rather than being some kind of negative other to it (ibid). This suggests that both history and memory are somewhat unreliable, and that the claims of historians, need to be considered in the context in which they are being made.

Unlike the abstract qualities of history and memory, relics are tangible survivals from the past, but what survives is uneven, the brick and masonry structures of the elite are more likely to survive than the cheap buildings of the poor. Neither offers an independent guide to the past, ‘their value lies in the knowledge we have of them and how we interpret or contextualise that knowledge’ (Trapeznik and McLean 2000:18). For instance, the story of a mansion might be told in terms of class relations, with entry through the servants quarters, and discussions about the way the house ‘worked’, as opposed to art historical discussions of banister construction or wallpaper patterns (Johnson 1999).

There is also a move away from house museums towards heritage as part of our daily surroundings. This approach emphasises the importance of continued use. Salmond makes the distinction between the conservation of museum objects and the preservation of buildings

*The striking difference between ongoing preservation of a building, compared with conservation of an object, is that it is of great importance that the building continues to be used, the doors open and shut, water runs out of taps, the air moves and changes and generally, that its use makes economic and social sense (2000:46)*

Without continued use baches are likely to succumb quite quickly to the elements but it remains to be seen what an appropriate economic or social use of bach landscapes might be.

### **2.2.3 Intellectual Approaches to Heritage**

The choices of how a building is utilised and interpreted are only aspects of more broadly discernible approaches to heritage. McLean argues that the identification of heritage in New Zealand reflects the dominance of an art historical approach which focuses on old, pretty buildings, and he wonders about the places and stories that are overlooked in ‘these worthy crusades to protect icons, flesh out big name architects portfolios or recognise a style such as Modernism’ (McLean 2002:16). He also argues that the art historical approach has limited the way a building’s history is interpreted. Following Hamer (1997), he suggests three stages or layers of history of an historic structure:

1. the original history
2. the history of survival and *of continued use* (emphasis in original)
3. the modern era since preservation

McLean claims that it is the original history that is ‘usually overwhelmingly emphasised by preservationists’ (ibid: 17), at the expense of later periods. He argues their desire to purge the buildings of extraneous additions is

*[Probably] because art historians and architects are not trained to see owners and occupiers as creators as well as users of space but it is time to stop treating this as though it was equivalent of grandad sitting and dribbling in the parlour in his pongy vest (ibid).*

This has particular relevance for baches, which often started as a single room and grew somewhat organically as funds or materials permitted. Interestingly, McLean



suggests that another stage should be added to the continuum; 'the history of a place before it was built' (ibid). This is precisely the heritage that those opposed to the baches prefer to emphasise, or failing that, the bach's original history. Arguments over where the emphasis should lie, are often an important dimension of what is considered an 'authentic' bach. For some it is the unchanged nature of the building, while for others it's the way it is inhabited. Olwig calls this distinction, the difference between tradition and custom. He notes that a 'strict emphasis on the preservation of authentic tradition tends to create an either/or situation in which some buildings are frozen in time and others are allowed to go to ruin' (2001:348). Custom by contrast is the 'source of ever-changing practices, rooted in a vital sense of the past' (ibid:339) and he argued that we should try to 'develop approaches to heritage that can increase the understanding of how principles of custom might work to create environments that both preserve a sense of historical continuity and remain economically and socially viable' (ibid:354). The frozen in time approach is exactly the one that has been favoured on Rangitoto Island, but I would suggest that the ongoing and provisional nature of baches means that they lend themselves to interpretation as custom. Before they can be interpreted though, they have to be identified as significant.

Determining the significance of buildings, groups of buildings and cultural landscapes relies on a broad range of criteria. These criteria include 'rarity, representative of building styles, the architects, the builders, cultural significance, significant owners or occupants, local or regional significance, materials, relative age, condition, integrity of landscape and history of use' (Trapeznik and McLean 2000:19).

These criteria, however, do not float free of intellectual perspectives even if they are only implicit ones, and these perspectives also structure the ongoing management of historic places. Janelle Warren-Findley (2001) in her report in human heritage management in New Zealand, outlines three intellectual perspectives which have or could possibly shape heritage identification and management; a fine arts perspective, a humanitarian perspective and an environmental perspective.

The fine arts perspective (which equates with what McLean calls the art historical approach) has a focus on architecture, beautiful buildings and places, and named designers and architects. It 'values the creative work of artists, and emphasises the structure of a object rather than its context' (Warren-Findley 2001:25). There is little scope in these schemes for vernacular material culture or intangible culture, and the 'perspective tends to minimise interpretation of the meanings of preserved buildings and to overlook the multiple stories that many landscapes can tell, by representing those stories through architecture and ornamental designs'(ibid). Warren-Findley also notes that a great deal of human heritage conservation work in New Zealand falls into this category.

The humanities perspective treats both pre historic and historic material culture as an archive of information about the past and focuses on historical meanings of heritage materials. It deals with both vernacular and designed heritage and cultural landscapes, which have layers of historic meaning (ibid). This perspective often utilises a thematic framework, which relates selection and interpretation to key historical events and themes and uses newer strategies such as heritage trails (McLean 2002).

The holistic environmental perspective differs from the 19<sup>th</sup> century treatments of natural history 'by combining all human history with natural or environmental history rather than separating native peoples and settler societies into natural and historical roles (Warren-Findlay 2001:26). She notes that this approach has developed internationally over the last twenty years and offers a contemporary statement from the English Heritage which reflects these new perspectives.

*The heart of any environmental policy should lie in recognising that an understanding of the historic dimension of the environment is a prerequisite for sustainable management. The historic environment provides the physical setting for our lives, but it is also about perceptions (what we see, how we interpret); it is dynamic, ever changing and constantly rethought and renegotiated (English Heritage in Warren-Findley 2001:26).*

There are strong similarities between this statement and the ideas outlined in discussions about landscape, which is probably not surprising because new ways of thinking about heritage have developed from an intellectual basis in disciplines such as human geography and anthropology. The adoption of a particular perspective whether it is implicit or explicit, affects the way bach heritage is recognised (or not), and has implications for their on going management. For instance, a fine arts perspective may only recognise the best examples or those associated with significant figures such as writers like Frank Sargeson or Prime Ministers like Robert Muldoon. Whereas, the humanities perspective may emphasise social cultural and tourist aspects of baches, but perhaps without completely considering their environmental context. The holistic environment perspective would appear to offer the best perspective for considering bach landscape heritage, but Warren-Findley cautions that the integration of heritage and environmentally driven management models is not easy to practice because

*environmental issues, rightly or wrongly tend to overwhelm the human ones. It is also true that natural heritage issues tend to be less controversial, contested or threatening to people than human history issues can be. The scientist in describing problems or solutions carries more authority than the human heritage professional describing the same sorts of problems or solutions. (Warren-Findley 2001:26)*

These intellectual perspectives structure not only the thinking about heritage but influence the possibility of even recognising heritage landscapes.

### **2.3 Heritage Landscape**

The connections between landscape and heritage vary between countries and are often played out at different scales. Jones and Cloke note that particular landscape types become iconic of national identity in certain countries, ideas of wilderness in the United States, the red centre of Australia or 'prolonged occupation in Britain weave heritage through landscape' (2002:186). This national scale of heritage may sometimes be recognised by the UNESCO World Heritage List which designates sites and landscape of international significance for instance Uluru Kata Tjuta in

Central Australia in 1987 (Wells 1996). In New Zealand three World Heritage areas have been designated, including, Te Wahipounamu in South Westland and Tongariro in the central North Island. Areas are designated for their cultural, natural or associative cultural values. Both of these areas were designated for their natural values and only subsequently did Tongariro become the first associative cultural landscape designated as a World Heritage Area. (Kirby 1996).

Kirby argues that for the Department of Conservation who nominated both areas and for many environmentalists 'New Zealand has an essential heritage, and it is natural. The traces of people in the landscape, though significant are on the whole regrettable' (1996:233). This may be linked to Lowenthal's suggestion that those countries with short European histories tend to highlight physical aspects of the country such as huge trees, deep canyons or tall mountains in lieu of a longer 'civilised' history (1985).

These larger scale representations of national heritage can be played out in local landscape as well, and there is sometimes an insistence that the prime heritage of a place is its natural heritage, as has happened at both Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island. Local landscapes however, can achieve recognition and affection, which is at odds with national level ideas of heritage landscapes. (Jones and Cloke 2002). This affection for local landscapes is often a product of local popular memory where an ongoing relationship with a place 'makes memories cohere in complex ways'. (Hayden 1995 quoted in Jones and Cloke 2002:187).

The recognition that these types of local landscape may deserve protection is a fairly recent phenomenon in New Zealand. Stephenson (2001) argues that many current heritage and landscape professionals do not have a way of seeing heritage landscapes, heritage professionals are preoccupied by sites or perhaps precincts while landscape architects focus on the existing patterns of the landscape and fail to recognise its temporal dimensions. It is, however apparent from overseas approaches that there is a greater recognition of the importance of understanding the historic environment as a prerequisite for sustainable management. It is also important to note as the quote from English Heritage indicated that these ideas about the past and present are not stable but are being constantly rethought and renegotiated. The

tentative nature of how we see the past is in part related to changing views of what history is and can achieve. These changing views are beautifully captured in an anonymous quote in William Least-Heat Moon book *Prairy Erth*

*Human beings inherit little History but many histories The past bequeaths a small nest egg of stable, undisputed facts and thick portfolios of speculative issues - divergent, ever changing interpretations - because presents and futures alter pasts....No one can predict the future of the past. (Notes and comments New Yorker 1989) in (1991:260)*

While the temporal dimensions of heritage landscape are complex, we also need to pay attention to the spatial dimensions. In thinking about the spatial dimensions of heritage landscape, it is important to make the distinction between the idea of heritage in a landscape context and the patterns of the landscape itself being heritage (Stephenson 2001). The former meaning highlights the baches location and its surroundings, the trees planted by bachholders, their gardens and their use of the outdoors for cooking and other activities intimately associated with bach living. The latter meanings highlight the pattern of the whole settlement, the way they are related to each other within the broader landscape. Baches at Taylors Mistake, on Rangitoto Island and many other places create a particularly distinctive landscape and this distinctiveness is, in part, related to the fact they were built without title. Rather than relating to property boundaries they relate to each other and the broader landscape (Athfield 1998). This is one of the key distinguishing features between those bach settlements which were established surreptitiously or with limited permission and the bach settlements established in subdivisions, whether they were in the 1920s or 1950s.

With the questions of the temporal and spatial formation of heritage landscapes and their ongoing use in mind, it is now appropriate to look at some of the places bach settlements were located, how they were established and the sorts of activities undertaken at the bach, what it is like to dwell in the bach, and how it has been represented in popular culture.

## Chapter 3 Bach Landscapes

New Zealander's familiarity with the bach seems to have led to the idea 'we' invented it, but maybe its just because buildings like the bach don't often have a very high profile that we are unaware of them in other countries. Most experts agree that we can claim the name of the building as 'ours', but its similarities to humble coastal holiday buildings overseas are striking. Nevertheless, the bach landscapes that developed in New Zealand are distinctive, and seem to reflect the combination of a small population and a long coastline.

### 3.1 International Relatives of the Bach

Contrary to much popular writing about baches/cribs (Chapple 1988, Cox 1995, Robinson 1997, Lynch 2000, Macdonald 2002), they were not a specifically New Zealand or 'Kiwi' invention, the impulse to build small holiday cottages at the water's edge is a widespread phenomenon. In England Denis Hardy and Colin Ward (1984) have surveyed what they called the 'makeshift landscape' of the Plotlands. These collections of shacks flourished along the South and East Coasts, and along rivers like the Thames during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In France, Michel Conan's review of sociological research related to what he called the 'urban invasion of rural culture' (1993:131) highlighted a survey of the

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Fig 4 'Habitants Paysagistes' near Montpellier

'growing number of spontaneous shack-like spas built on wastelands along rivers near to town. These structures are used on weekends and holidays by working-class anglers and families'

(1993:136). (See fig 4)



Fig 5 Point Roberts Washington State USA, near Vancouver Canada

Known as 'habitants paysagistes', they reflected the urge to escape the city and build

in a congenial, neighbourly environment, despite a scarcity of building materials (ibid). A similar story is repeated in Australia, where the form is known as the 'weekender' (Ramson 1988) and in Canada where cabins surround lakes in Ontario and beach houses congregate along parts of the British Columbia coast. (See Fig 5 )

While the exact configurations of buildings differ in each country, the variations on a theme of where and how they were constructed were often remarkably similar, although, why they were constructed was often more specific to each country. Hardy and Ward argue that

for the 'Plotlands',  
the key factor in  
their location and  
appearance was  
'marginality'.

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They were to be  
found on marginal  
land neglected by  
commercial builders

Fig 6 East Bognor England Railway Carriages

and farmers. 'Sites liable to flood, steep slopes, shingle ridges and wind-swept sand dunes all offered a place in the sun for the enterprising, if not the rich' (1984:2). Plots of land were

bought cheaply,  
or sometimes  
acquired at no  
cost, through

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Fig 7 Taylors Mistake Railway Carriages

squatting. The need for economy combined with marginal sites and the direct involvement of unskilled builders, created a unique architecture. 'It was invariably a world of single storey houses, simply built and often using wood, though never refusing whatever material (corrugated iron, asbestos, pre-cast concrete and bricks) lay at hand' (ibid) They often demonstrated considerable invention including conversions of redundant railway carriages, old bus bodies, vans, trams and army surplus huts. (See Fig 6 and 7)

The impulses to build appear to differ particularly between England and new world countries such as New Zealand. Hardy and Ward argue that in a country where only 10 per cent of dwellings were owner-occupied by 1914, the Plotlands offered a chance for significant numbers of working class people to own their first home, even if it was only visited at weekends and holidays. This desire for a place of one's own contributed to widely dispersed pattern of settlements, with less emphasis on scenery, and included many inland locations.

One of the earliest of these settlements was Bungalow Town, whose origins go back to 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*It is said that it all started one summer when a camper put up his tent in the lonely expanse of shingle, returning next year with a railway carriage. In the 1880s and 1890s others followed with railway carriages hauled over the mudflats at low tide... Conditions were rudimentary (at least until the 1930s) but never apparently a problem for those who stayed there; on the contrary, there very simplicity was its attraction... Somehow, the whole scene was itself like a filmset – the flimsy bungalows, like props for a make-believe world. For fifty years Bungalow Town was cocooned in an alluring web of fantasy and romance until in 1939, as if the film had been shot, the scene changed dramatically. The actors moved on to be replaced by defending troops...and this time it was defence artillery rather than the odd railway carriage that was hauled on to the shingle. (Hardy and Wood 1984:91-94).*

The outbreak of war in 1939 altered the priorities for the English coastline and 'over the next six years most of the 700 bungalows were demolished' (ibid). After the war a new set of circumstances favoured the authorities desire to clear the Plotlands. There was an urgency to restore the natural landscapes, especially sand dunes, a changing political climate, which esteemed national advantage over private gain and planners had new powers to turn policies into practical measures (Hardy and Ward 1984:64-65)



The emergence of the building type known in Australia as the 'weekender' also parallels the bach especially the way they occupied public land, if this 1935 entry in the Australian National Dictionary is representative of how settlements developed – '75 holes hacked in the forest for room to plant untastefully designed unpainted tin-roofed weekenders' (Ramson 1988:719). The earliest usage of weekender is thought to be 1921 but as with the bach the building would precede the name. The weekender also gained iconic status in Australia, as this quote from 1971 illustrates 'once upon a time building a weekender for holidays and eventually retirement – was an integral part of the Australian dream like owning a Holden, a Victa lawnmower and one's own home' (ibid). There are even parallels between the cave baches at Taylors Mistake and cave huts in sea cliffs at Crater Cove near Sydney (Kerr 1999). While it might deflate aspects of our collective ego to learn that Australians have a very similar heritage it should not surprise us given the similarities of colonization.

### **3.2 Origins of the Bach/Crib**

While the type of building is clearly not unique in New Zealand the name for it appears to have developed here first. Ramson (1988) notes that while bach, meaning a makeshift dwelling also occurs in Australia, its usage probably derived from New Zealand. There is however quite a gap between the appearance of the activity, and the appearance of the word describing the object. Building makeshift shelters to stay in for the weekend was occurring in the early 1880s if not earlier (Potts 1882) and was occurring in a number of places in the first decade of the twentieth century, while the main modern sense of a bach as a weekend or holiday cottage does not appear until 1924 according to Orsman (1997) and even then the spelling is 'batch'.

Orsman in his Dictionary of New Zealand English suggests that the word started as the verb 'to batch', meaning 'to live alone as a bachelor, to "do" for oneself (often in the temporary absence of a spouse)', first recorded here in 1890 but noted from the US as early as 1862 (Orsman: 1997:23). It then became the simple habitation with no or primitive conveniences in which a single man lived and only acquired its currently accepted usage as a holiday cottage, and spelling in 1930s and 1940s. The crib, on the other hand, developed from Scottish origins, meaning a small habitation, and was in use throughout New Zealand from the 1850s onwards (ibid: 182). By 1909 it had

acquired its specialised usage as this advertisement in The Otago Daily Times suggests

*A crib at Puketerahi. Beautifully built weekend crib...Everything that four fellows could possibly require (ibid)*

The usual dividing line between the bach and the crib is the Waitaki River, with cribs south of the river and baches north. Thompson notes that many of the cribs around Shag Point in the Otago coast were converted farm buildings made of sod, rammed earth and stone and that 'these crofter-type cottages which were surprisingly still being built as late as the 1930s'(1985:83)

Recently Peter Wood has attempted to make the link with New Zealanders experience of war, particularly at Gallipoli, and he has questioned the obvious equating of baches with a bachelors lifestyle. He notes that both major phases of bach and crib building occurred immediately after the two World Wars in the 1920s, and 1940/1950s. His concern is that contemporary discussions about the architecture of the New Zealand bach.

*Exclude versions of history that cannot be accounted for by the notions of typology, style or chronological development. Such interpretations risk forgetting that architecture, and its resonances (meaning), are as much the product of complex social and cultural arrangements as they are comparative formal descriptions. (Wood 2000:54)*

Wood's suggestion has been summarily dismissed by Nigel Cook who rejects attempts to set the bach in a 'bookish context' and argues, 'baches do not need to be yanked into any grand tradition; they are much closer to the unthought natural' (2002:64). While I am inclined to agree, that because baches were being built well before WWI, they should not be seen as resulting directly from the experience of war, they do make a good place to recover from the psychological torment of war.

In England, Peacehaven one of the early Plotlands, was originally to have be called 'New Anzac on Sea'. Many of the plots were taken by returning servicemen, but it was regarded rather unfavourably many people. John Seymour writing in a 1975 guidebook to the South Coast of England characterised it somewhat differently.

*Peacehaven is the place most people love to hate, I try my best but really I cannot find anything so terrible about a township knocked up by ex soldiers after 1918, with their pathetic little gratuities, in order to have somewhere to live away from noise and violence, of which they had presumably had enough* (Quoted in Hardy and Ward 1984:90).

Making assertions about the origins of the bach/crib is difficult, but it seems likely that bach settlements developed for reasons other than the desire to own land, which Hardy and Ward (1985) suggest was one of the key motivations of the Plotlands.

New Zealand, allegedly, had the highest rate of home ownership in the world by the late 1920s (Belich 2001) consequently, the bach/crib has always been seen as a holiday destination, despite instances of full time occupation, particularly during the depression. The bach was an escape and positive contrast to every-week life (Thompson 1985). There are, however, connections between the locations of certain bach settlements and particular activities.

### **3.3. Locations and Activities**

Hundreds of bach and crib settlements developed around the coasts, lake margins and river valleys of New Zealand during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. What had started as a trickle in the last couple of decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century increased steadily after the First World War and became a deluge in the 1950s with bach numbers rising from barely 14,000 at the start of the decade to about 25,000 by the end of the decade (Thom 1973). (See Appendix 1)

It is possible however to distinguish between those settlements related closely to a particular activity, which Paul Thompson (1985) calls 'working baches' and those more closely associated with the general idea of holidays. Working baches were often built to be near fishing or shooting localities and tended to be built earlier than typical beach baches.

Keen trout fishermen probably built most baches around lakes in both the North and South Island, although their subsequent use may have been more varied. These include the South Island settlements of Lake Alexandrina. (Department of Lands and Survey 1980a) Loch Katrine and Lake Clearwater (Axford 2003). Axford notes that 80-year-old Ken Baxter's father Earnest 'was a keen fisherman and had the first hut at

the lake. For decades it stood on its own in the tussock with no trees around it until the former Ashburton County Council opened a leasehold subdivision in the 1960s' (2003:84). One factor that often contributes to these lakes being selected for fishing is that they are wildlife refuges and powerboats are banned (ibid).

There are several settlements around Lake Taupo and the various Rotorua lakes as well as isolated baches. Thompson (1985) notes that many of the remaining bach settlements are on Maori land that have stayed relatively unchanged, including Hatepe where the Chairman of the Opawa Rangitoto Corporation 'paced out sections for baches...[and] had all prospective bach owners meet him so he could assess their suitability for Hatepe' (1985:37).

Other working baches were based around duck shooting, salmon fishing or whitebaiting. Selwyn Huts and Greenpark Huts were near the edge of Lake Ellesmere/Waihora were bases for duck shooters (Ellesmere Camera Club 1997) while just down the coast at the Rakaia rivermouth salmon fishing was the main attraction (ibid). On the West Coast many baches started life as mine workers huts or Ministry of Works camps, but now they provide bases for whitebaiting, deerstalking and fishing (Thompson 1985)

In contrast with those places where particular activities were the foremost reason for the bach settlement, for many beach settlements particularly in the northern half of the North Island the place itself was more important. They were for getting away from the normal weekday activities (Thompson 1985). Some of the earliest holiday baches were built at Mount Maunganui in the years following the turn of the century, which was the preferred holiday destination of many Waikato farmers (Hawkes 2001). The settlements on Rangitoto Island were more about outdoor family holidays even though 'practically everyone fished' (Yoffe 2000:34). Children relished the unsupervised freedom that was possible on Rangitoto

*We had some wonderful times there. We're often asked what we did for amusement. We would go fishing, hiking swimming. In the morning you would wake up, go down to the wharf, and see kingfish swimming about and made spears to spear them. (Respondent in Yoffe 2000:33).*

A few bach settlements were not located primarily near water. These included the Orongorongo huts near Wellington, built mostly by keen trampers in the 1930s and 1940s. Although in most respects they fit the model of the bach settlement, their owners always identified them as huts because you had to walk several miles to them as opposed to being able to drive to the bach (A McCallum pers comm). Other settlements located more in a bush setting include Blandswood near Mt Peel and Bealey Spur, where activities were more likely to include walking and tramping.

At some settlements, the original activity has largely been superseded by new activities. Taylors Mistake was originally settled by fisherman staying overnight to avoid the journey back to Christchurch but since the start of the surf life saving club in 1916 the bachholders have formed the backbone of the club and it has been the main focus for many bachholders, although many do still fish (Cairns and Turpin 1991).

David Thom suggests that many of the northern beach settlements were an extension of the traditional beach picnic made possible by increasing car ownership, low land prices and lax subdivision rules (1973). Initially these were near the major city of Auckland, particularly on the North Shore, but as these areas urbanised the Coromandel Peninsula and Northland became favoured baching locations. The bach become a place to recharge your batteries, (Hawkes 2001) or play games of scrabble and monopoly (Lynch 2000) as well as more active recreation. There is often a deliberate attempt to remain unaware of the outside world. 'Television has only recently been allowed, Peter says the bach is "for reading and catching up"' (Hawkes 2001).

The section has looked at some of the reasons why baches were established in particular locations but it is also interesting to see how they were established, as this often affected of community that developed (or lack of it) and much of the subsequent history of dealings with the relevant authorities

### **3.4 Establishment and Organisation**

It is possible to make a distinction between spontaneous and ordered baches. The former were built on public land in relation to each other and the landscape, while the

latter were built in relation to the property boundaries of subdivisions. Cook suggests a somewhat similar split in terms of types of baches before and after WWII. The earlier type, one room with lean-tos added on and a simple roof, he argues was a common house type scattered around the edges of Auckland but now only survives in out of the way bach settlements. The later type was built in substantial numbers in suburban beach subdivisions after the war. The ordering of space is different, 'they tend to be more four square and orderly than earlier ones – fewer personalised additions, more lean-to roofs sitting on bare, neat lawns with definite front fences – suburbia sidling in – they assert themselves in a way the earlier ones did not' (2002:63)

While there is an elegance and simplicity to these splits, they also serve to blur and hide distinctions. Holiday subdivisions were occurring well before WWII and simple one-room affairs and squatting were occurring well after the war. At Loch Katrine for instance between 1980 and 1992 a further 19 baches were illegally added to the existing 41. (DoC 1993). Relying merely on the type of building or whether they were on public or private land only tells part of their story, because the status of the land shifted. Baches illegally established become legalised while ones legitimately established can now have their tenure revoked by new authorities.

To highlight the complex ways baches were established, and the implications this has for their on going survival, I have identified four modes of establishment; squatting, invitation, permission and subdivision. The four ways that bach settlements were established follow a roughly chronological order although some categories continued throughout the bach/crib building era. The first type of settlements developed largely from individuals squatting on crown land or otherwise waste or unwanted ground. Most settlements developed some degree of legality when the local authority licensed the baches and charged license fees, rental or rates. The second form of settlement developed with the official encouragement of the local authority while the third form of settlement occurred when local farmers gave their permission for baches to be erected on their land. The fourth type of bach settlement occurred when developers or landowners subdivided coastal areas

### 3.4.1 Squatting

The earliest baches/cribs (although they were usually known as huts or whare) developed as a response to transport difficulties. At Taylor's Mistake the first fishermen had to either walk or cycle the 15 kilometres from Christchurch until 1888, when the tram to Sumner became an option. Either way still entailed a three-kilometre walk over Scarborough Hill (Ogilvie 1978). Rather than making the return journey the same day the fishermen developed camping caves by blocking off the entrances of caves in the sea cliffs. T.H. Potts reports in 1882 that

*[At] Taylors Mistake, near Sumner, they (penguins) used to burrow in the soil on top of the cliff, a fact not unknown to the Natives, as we have there met with a party of Maori hunters with bundles of the korora in goodly numbers. We remember a V hut was built on a rocky site not far above the water, -a spot that had been the resort of penguins - the folks who occupied the cottage were constantly disturbed at night by the noise made by the birds that were woffling or barking beneath the flooring boards (1882:214).*

This appears to be the first reference to a building that would subsequently be described as a bach and places it substantially earlier than 1897, the date given by

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Fig 8 "Whare Moki" an early cave bach that still exists in Hobsons Bay

Gordon Ogilvie for the first cave bach at Taylors Mistake (1978). (See fig 8) 'Ten or dozen' (in Marquet 1998:4) such cave baches had developed by 1910 when the Mayor of the Sumner Borough Council first investigated the situation and agreed to license the baches for a nominal sum of 2/6.

Also in the 1880s a group of fishermen's shacks appeared on the coastline at Makara, a rugged west coast beach near Wellington. While their appearance was similar to that of baches, in that they were 'constructed of whatever was available - often found items provided by the sea' (Wipatene 1993:4) they were actually part of a permanent fishing village that operated until the 1930s. Perhaps it was this precedent that encouraged a later wave of weekend bach dwellers to re-occupy the site in the 1940s and 1950's despite a subdivision having been available several hundred metres away at the river mouth since 1925. These later squatters were finally removed in the five years preceding 1970 although relict concrete piles and perimeter walls remain (Wipatene 1993).

As the availability of transport increased in the 1920s and 1930s with bus services becoming available and private vehicle ownership increasing, bach/crib settlements developed further from the main centres of population. At Tongaporutu, a river mouth estuary 70 kilometres north of New Plymouth,

*...there was so little of the red tape that binds such activities today that 1930s campers who fell in love with the remote and pretty cove...could clear the ground and knock up a cabin without causing offence. At that time, neighbouring farmers - the various pa - had long been abandoned - and roads authorities were pleased to see the riverbanks and roadsides tidied and maintained. Controlling councils turned a blind eye to the speck of land that barely got a mention...When the baches did get officially noticed, it was with tacit approval. In the post-war years, councils levied rates and rents. In 1975 the bach owners were granted 30-year leases (Smith 2001:7).*

Even when councils did express concern with baches being built, they might not then follow with any action. Mount Herbert County Council disliked baches in the Lyttelton Harbour basin because they were considered poorly constructed, disfigured



the area, and attracted city people from Christchurch who used local services (Baxter 2001). In 1932, they forbade construction of foreshore baches and demanded removal of existing ones. A respondent in Baxter's study recounts the arrival of one of the baches at the small bach settlement of Maori Gardens, near Governors Bay;

*In the early thirties a truck loaded to the hilt with timber and all sorts came and it all went over and down and that was the start of the baches there, things just used to happen in those days, there was no damage being done and you weren't infringing anyone's rights, not a lot of people used to go around there, just the ones with the baches (quoted in Baxter 2001:63)*

It is difficult to know how widespread this practice was, because bachholders probably prefer to keep a low profile if their bach has dubious legal status, and whether these types of squatter settlements become contentious is highly dependent on their size and location. In the 1920s and 1930s, there was another way that baches could occupy public land; that was to be invited by Domain Boards or other local authorities.

### 3.4.2 Invitation

One of the earliest examples of official encouragement leading to the development of bach communities occurred on Rangitoto Island (See Fig 9 ) which is covered in Susan Yoffe's excellent report on 1920's and 1930's holiday communities. The island was already popular with day visitors in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and an estimated 2500

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Fig 9 Baches and Boatsheds at Rangitoto Wharf

people visited on November 3 1897 to attend the official opening of the Pioneer track from the wharf to the summit (Yoffe 2000:20). Some informal camping was already

taking place when, in 1911 the Rangitoto Island Domain Board offered campsites for lease at 2 pounds per year or a weekly charge of 2/6, ostensibly to raise income for the provision of further facilities (Yoffe 2000).

A story of parallel evolution of official bach encouragement occurred in the Orongorongo Valley near Wellington. The Valley is currently in the Rimutaka Forest Park but in the 1920s and 1930s it was administered by Wellington City and Suburban Water Supply Board who leased sites for building huts (Sewell 1989). The first of more than 70 huts concealed in bush along the river bank was built in 1916 and known as Baine-iti. The 'pleasant hour's stroll through the bush' (Thompson 1985:47) meant that most baches were 'fairly primitive' (ibid.) and appealed mainly to those interested in tramping. Thompson also notes that some of the baches use local materials (rocks and trees) and thus seem 'older and more a part of the landscape than do many baches'. (ibid.) With the change to Forest Park status the Orongorongo baches were due 'to be phased out as licensees died or had no further use for them'. (Sewell 1989:54) Apart from natural attrition, this has yet to happen (A.McCallum pers comm).

### **3.4.3 Permission**

This is the quintessential story of bach development in New Zealand. A family head off for a summer camping holiday at the coast, they drive to Northland, the Coromandel Peninsula or the Bay of Plenty and ask a local farmer if they can camp. The following year they come back and start building a bach/crib, and the year after that several friends come too and start building their own baches. This was able to happen in the 1950's because the coast was 'subject to uneven legislation and was largely in farm ownership' (Thom 1973:50). A real estate agent in the late 1960's characterised the pioneer type,

*[He] wanders around in out of the way places and doesn't worry if the roads are bad or that there are not shops and no electric power, he persuades some struggling farmer to sell him a small parcel of land on which to build a little shack where he thereafter spends a great part of his spare time. He contributes little to the community but in the course of time*

*some of his friends and acquaintances hear about his hideaway, become converts and persuade the farmer to create a small subdivision to let them in. The County gathers a bit more revenue, the roads improve, the Power Board runs a line along the beach and along comes the next group (Gillam 1969:69).*

An early example of this approach occurred near Dargaville in Northland where land was leased from a farmer, appropriately enough Mr. Bayly, to set up the Bayly Town Camp Club in 1914. Seventeen sections were balloted and,

*...the lucky would-be bach-owner had to agree to a set of rules designed to preserve the peace of the place. Provisos included: No dogs; Persons who contract infectious diseases must return home immediately. No additions to be undertaken during the December/January holiday period (Thompson 1985:15).*

It is perhaps not surprising that these initial bach-holders were mainly lawyers, doctors and other professionals and included the soon to be Prime Minister, Joseph Gordon Coates (Mulligan 1996:142).

Other settlements, which relied on farmer generosity or straightened financial circumstances occurred all over the country. A picture in W.A. Taylors *Banks Peninsula: Picturesque and Historic* from 1937 (unpaginated) shows the beginnings of the small bach settlement at Pile Bay in Lyttelton Harbour, only a few kilometres around the headland and across the water from Taylors Mistake.

What started as a summer camping area has become a tightly clustered group of nine baches on a half acre plot. A couple of the pine trees remain and tower over the baches, four of which extend a few metres on to the unformed legal road around the coastline (Dept of Lands and Survey 1982).

#### **3.4.4 Subdivision**

When coastal land is privately owned subdivision has been the way most settlements have proliferated since the 1950's although in some places subdivisions were much earlier than this. Two of the earliest coastal subdivisions for holiday accommodation

both occurred in the mid 1920s. At the Rakaia River mouth, fishermen had built shacks and huts for temporary shelter before 1900 and by 1924 17 sections at the Little Rakaia Township subdivision were offered on land owned by F. Person and A. Cridge. The auctioneer's notes state that they were 'specially suitable for angler's week-end houses' (Ellesmere Camera Club 1997:173).

At Makara, although land at the river mouth was surveyed and subdivided by the landowner in 1925, only a handful of baches had been built by 1941. Again the auction notice was explicit about their weekend use,

*Makara Beach Subdivision; Commands a splendid view of Cook Strait and this subdivision is the nearest unsold seaside property to the City of Wellington. The surroundings are most pleasurable. The air is bracing and health-giving. Good beach, sea fishing, trout fishing and swimming. It is unequalled as a Seaside Resort for week-end homes or camps* (quoted in Wipatene 1993:5).

Wipatene suggests that the discovery of just how bracing the air can be at Makara may have explained why barely half the sections were sold. The heyday of bach building didn't occur until the 1950's when the availability of transport made Makara more accessible to Wellington residents (ibid).

Some of the early subdivisions, particularly those based around a particular sporting interest, are only just becoming or have yet to become popular whereas the sandy, eastern coasts of the northern North Island were becoming popular in the 1950's.

In 1955 the price of a quarter acre section at Tokerau Beach, Doubtless Bay in Northland was 200 pounds, which could be paid off at 10 shillings a week on a 10-pound deposit (Thom 1973). This made coastal land affordable for the population of newly mobile workers and created a demand for new subdivisions.

*Between 1955 and 1965 beach after beach was bought and subdivided. This had to be done according to the rules, the only ones being the Land Subdivision in Counties Act and Counties Amendment Act 1961. We can see today that these were merely elementary controls directed at expansion on the outskirts of rural boroughs... [and] that they were in themselves inappropriate to the seaside situation, was appreciated by few (Thom 1973:52) (See Fig 10)*

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Fig 10 'There are few better examples of misuse of a recreational resource than Tairua' (Locker 1973:108)

'The rules were applied in the absence of a policy with a devastating lack of creative imagination and an equal lack of appreciation of the realities of sand and soil conditions and future servicing...Compared with the earlier freely sited and leisure oriented bach settlements it was retrogressive' (ibid). No matter how the bach was established, though it often provided the possibility of dwelling in a completely different environment.

## Chapter 4 Dwelling in the Bach Landscape

These possibilities included being able to build the bach oneself and tasks of continually maintaining it, the types of social relations it offered and experiences over time, relations with nature and with other places.

### 4.1 Doing it yourself and ongoing modifications

One of the key characteristics of the bach is that it was built by the occupier, and added to as funds and materials allowed (Thompson 1985). On Rangitoto Island, none of the early settlers had much money and because access was difficult they tended to build one room corrugated iron sheds or use demolition timber, and the building process was ongoing and frequently resourceful. Two of the bach holders described how they

*searched the island and looked for the stuff blown on the shore. The muck that was built into the old bach; it staggers me that it is still standing. I remember going round to where the jail site was. They used to have wooden bunks with sides. I cut off all the wooden sides and they were used for noggings. It was quite a big job getting the materials down there because they weren't big boats - they were passenger boats (quoted in Yoffe 2000:33).*

*alot of the places down there were old car cases and pieces off the wrecks round the back. Those wrecks were rabbited for years (quoted in Yoffe 2000:46).*

Yoffe notes that while children mostly remembered endless days of summer fun their memories of their parents holidays, 'are of the continual work of building and upgrading the baches, cooking and providing for the family in the way of fishing' (ibid. 2000:46). Without the cost of buying a section baching on Rangitoto was an affordable alternative for many working class people seeking an outdoor holiday. This also contributed to the progressively built character of many of the baches with additions made as finances became available.

Change often happens incrementally to the structure of baches. Wipatene (1993) outlines how baches are undergoing continual modification as they assume new roles.

Each of the six buildings he studied, at Makara, had had a series of alterations, through the 1960s and 1970s these tended to be increases in the number of bedrooms and size of living rooms, while alterations in the 1980s and 1990s tended to improve the quality of living space with conservatories and deck extensions. Adding to the bach is clearly an important aspect of bach life whether they are on public or freehold land, however when they are both on public land and under threat from the local authority maintenance, let alone additions, are unlikely to occur. All baches, however, create opportunities for social relations.

## **4.2 Social Relations**

The bach allowed for various types of social interaction. The mix of people at a settlement was often quite diverse and created opportunities to socialise with people who may not have mixed in the city. It also provided a place where several generations of the same family could come together.

### **4.2.1 Within settlements**

The location of the bach/crib played a role in the type of social relations that were experienced on holiday at the bach. In places where baches developed into small settlements, meeting up with people who you had spent time with last summer was part of the attraction. At isolated baches, however, social relations were most likely to be limited to extended family or family friends specifically invited along on holiday.

Yoffe (2000) notes that although all the Rangitoto bachholders came from Auckland they tended not to socialize together in town, apart from Bachholders Association meetings and fundraising events. Out on the island though, friendships were quickly renewed.

*As soon as my grandmother got off the ferry Mrs Clark would talk to her, and then go on and the next ones would want to talk. It would take 20 mins to get to the bach. My grandmother loved it. (quoted in Yoffe 2000:50)*

The place and the repetition of the interaction gave friendships stability that didn't require continual relations.

*We didn't see people in Auckland. We could go down every summer and just pick up where we left off. The associations go back such along time. (quoted in Yoffe 2000:50)*

While it might be argued that communities of any type were closer knit in the 1920s and 1930s, the importance of ongoing summer friendships is a theme that is just as likely to be heard today. As Ross Buckley says about his family's bach at Pataua North in Northland which has been in the family for the last 47 years.

*We have a lot of friends here. I love the fishing. Yep I'd like to think the bach will stay in our family. The place means a lot to me (in Pearson 2001:108).*

The experience of returning to a particular place each summer is not restricted to bach communities in New Zealand. It also occurs at campgrounds and caravan parks by the beach or the lake. Each summer the 'regulars' return to Glendhu Bay by Lake Wanaka or Tahunanui beach near Nelson, from different parts of the country and renew the friendships from last summer. While friendships with others you had not seen since last summer are often part of summer holidays, there has also been a tendency to mythologize the idea of bach community, as though proximity creates community. Yoffe notes that each of the three bach settlements on Rangitoto Island had different community dynamics and their stability depended on their location and size.

The smallest settlement at Beacon End, which had at most 10 baches, was physically remote from the other two settlements and the wharf, though it was directly opposite Devonport and tended to be accessed directly across the Rangitoto channel by those with boats. Some of the baches were former quarry workers houses while others were "tin sheds with very little comfort" (ibid:25). There were a mixture of families and bachelors among the bach-holders and their different ages and interests meant that they were seldom all there together.

*We had some fraternisation but it wasn't normal as you have in other places. Never got together in the evenings to play cards. But they used*



*to come over now and again and have a cup of tea. A campfire sometimes* (quoted in Yoffe 2000:28).

The two larger settlements of Rangitoto Wharf and Islington Bay both developed into more tightly knit communities. This was partly because, after initial settlement, news of the sites spread through friendships, kinships, work and business relationships. At Islington Bay one of the earliest bach-holders belonged to the Masonic Lodge and half a dozen families came through this association.

There were, however, distinct differences between the two larger communities, which Yoffe suggests, had a great deal to do with geographical location. Rangitoto Wharf was readily accessible with a public launch service, shop and caretaker. Bach holder numbers rose steadily throughout the 1920's which led to gradual change and assimilation of newcomers. Islington Bay was more isolated and change, when it came, was dramatic. The construction of a prisoner built road connecting the hitherto isolated Islington Bay with Rangitoto Wharf in 1933 altered the character of the community in several ways. The road allowed vehicle access for supplies from the shop at Rangitoto Wharf so there was less reason to borrow a cup of flour from a neighbour, but it also signalled the arrival of a new type of bach-holder - one who could afford to employ a builder (Yoffe 2000). The new, wealthier bach holders set up a competing Shackholders Association and paid for the building of a hall and tennis courts, rather than doing it together as a community project. There was also a transformation of traditional festivities from 'informal, inexpensive fun, focused on the Bay environment, to a more expensive and sophisticated occasion... People felt the Isi Bay spirit was lacking when the ready made fancy-dress from Auckland replaced the Bay-made ones and the inexpensive prizes from Farmers were supplanted by silver cups' (Yoffe 2000:58). This change of emphasis was resented by the 'originals', particularly as it meant the co-operative effort put into building paths and baches was undermined when professional builders were employed.

*Co-operation died when the rich people came in – well the spirit changed...I think the early people relied on each other more – they built their own places. We had someone come and put up the framing and we did the rest of it. So there was that ' you help me and I'll help*

*you', which afterwards there didn't have to be to the same degree as builders built the baches or they were already there (quoted in Yoffe 2000:59)*

Not only was the spirit changing but one of the essential characteristics of the bach – building it yourself was changing the bach into the holiday house. The professionally built baches of Islington Bay are perhaps the first manifestation of the trend for wealthy holiday houses usually identified as starting in earnest in the 1960s (Milligan 1996)

*When we built no one was affluent. After the Depression more moneyed people came over and built beautiful baches - built by a builder - all those up on the road. Things changed then. Before that we were all poor and had fun on nothing. They owned launches, speed boats etc. (quoted in Yoffe 2000:59).*

One issue that professionally built baches raise, is whether their superior building quality increases or lowers their heritage value. I will address this in the heritage section of the chapter eight. No matter whom they are built by, baches tend to become a rich part of a family's history.

#### **4.2.2 Within Families**

The bach, as Ross Buckley indicated, is also a place where different generations come together, and it highlights the importance of family continuity. Tracy Magan's bach at Ohiwa, in the Bay of Plenty, was built by her great-grandparents in 1955 and her grandparents built another one next door in 1962, the bach stayed in the family and

*was passed to my mother and her four brothers and now that my mother has died it belongs to my brother and me and our four uncles. We used to go altogether when I was growing up but now there are too many of us so each family takes a week over summer...The bach means an awful lot to me. I kind of grew up there. It gives me a good feeling because everything that happened there was fun. I've taken my*

*two-year old daughter Jilly to the bach three or four times now and I always feel like I'm going home* (quoted in Pearson 2001:109).

Often owners of baches see themselves as stewards of a way of life, until the next generation take over, because part of owning a bach is respecting the family legacy of who built it and how integral it was to growing up. Carolyn Sylvester's story of her family's bach at Bealey Spur near Arthurs Pass is typical in this respect.

*My father built the bach 36 years ago. Now my brother and I have inherited it, and it will be passed on to our children. There's no way we'd ever sell it, it was such a big part of our growing up. I'd say it's the main reason both of us came home to New Zealand after stints overseas* (quoted in Pearson 2001:110).

In a country where living in the same house is no longer as common as it was, retaining a holiday bach in the family for 40 or 50 years provides stability and identity, but they also offered a place where it was easy to experience nature.

#### **4.3 Relations with Nature**

Whether the bach or crib was on the coast, beside a lake or in the mountains, they often allowed for intimate explorations of nature. Carolyn Sylvester remembers that

*[As] kids, we spent a lot of time building dams. We'd also make tree-huts by bending branches in the bush and covering them with moss. They'd actually grow, so we had all these living camouflaged huts to play in. I liked to make a game of getting 'lost' in the bush for hours. Our parents taught us bushcraft, and I knew the bush so well, I always found my way home again* (ibid).

Similarly, Margaret Jefferies remembers summers spent at a bach in Tapu on the Thames Coast

*They were wonderfully happy times, leaving indelible memories of salt-sticky hair, sun browned arms and legs, hot sand, dark juicy plums, cockles, swimming in warm seas, hot sand, cicadas sawing and the tang of Manuka* (Jefferies 1991:48)

The rich and sensuous array of experiences of both writers suggests that holidays at the bach were always about more than the building itself. The surrounding landscape was often intensively explored and the sounds, smells, touch and tastes play a powerful role in the structuring these memories in a way sight might not. Indeed Macnaghten and Urry (1998) suggest that while vision has played an important part of disembodied peoples relationship with nature, the lived experience and memories of particular places are critically bound up with their smells and sounds, even when we cannot identify the particular smell or sound, they help to sustain a particular sense of place.

The bach also allowed for a more complex and intimate understanding of nature's processes

*Death the cycles that life has turned through in this place rarely enters so tangibly into my city existence. And the mating cries of birds, the arrival of their eggs, the gradual feathering of the fledglings are also cycles we have time to watch. The cycles of sun and moon, the emergence of stars, the rise and fall of tides, the morning and evening breezes. Its not that we even focus on these things, but we take them in, just part of the fresh air we're breathing. (Cox 1995:47).*

This of course has parallels with tramping holidays in the bush and arguably any extended time spent in rural areas potentially offers a similar connection with nature's cycles, however these experiences are often heightened at the coast as Lloyd Jones says of coastlines

*They juggle two seemingly opposed ideas combining a start to something with the finish of something else. Where the land ends /the sea begins. No wonder we feel like boundary-runners when we walk by the sea. No wonder we find it so uplifting to be neither here nor there (1998:67).*

For others it is the absences and differences in their respective experiences of a place that are important, what is not there as much as what is.

*Summer at Bethels Beach (Te Henga) isn't about parties with lifesavers, garden bars, crates of beer, dances, soundshell concerts, drag racing or tugs-of-war on crowded camping grounds. You don't smell Danish waffles, pesto or sausage sizzles as you stroll the sand dunes. You don't hear the gentle drone of refrigerators in caravans or the thump thump of mallets on tent pegs. The cars don't park between white lines, the sand burns your feet if you dare walk on it and the umbrellas get blown away in the wind. (Chunn 1998:66).*

Sometimes nature is all too present at the bach, and exerts its unstoppable power. The baches at Te Kopi, on the rugged Cape Palliser coast of the Wairarapa, are gradually falling into the sea. In the four years between 1993 and 1997 nine baches were undermined by coastal erosion, and fell into the sea (Norman 1997). The baches at Hobsons Bay, near Taylors Mistake, face similar erosion problems, but also have the prospect of the cliffs above them crashing through their roofs (Mathias 1995). The ongoing processes of nature are matched by similar temporal connections with the bach and its contents.

#### **4.4 Temporal Aspects of Bach Places**

Often the contents of the bach play a powerful role in structuring memories of the bach. It is where urban hand-me-downs go when they become unfashionable in town and don't fit the new decor, but they are often assured a long life at the bach. For Nicola Legat who shares a 1940s bach in Piha

*It is our privilege to inhabit a little dwelling which is rich with the legacy of the wonderful family which cherished it for 40 years, there are pieces of furniture which carry stories, an oddball collection of books, (The Splendid Book for Boys stands alongside books purchased from the Friends of the Soviet Union Bookshop and a complete guide to Morris Dancing), trees whose planting is remembered, shells and pieces of driftwood collected over the decades. To this midden of family memorabilia we gradually add our own layers (Legat 1999:130)*

As Ansley notes 'a bach is a collection of lives' (2002:21). They accumulate artefacts from different generations, which seldom get thrown out and Magan notes that 'all my grandmothers crockery is still there' (in Pearson 2001:109). It is the layers of use, the accretions of time, the patina of continued occupation which are, I think, one of the bach's strongest claims to be considered heritage but they are also the things often deemed least important when baches are assessed for their heritage value.

#### **4.5 Relations with other places**

Few bach settlements have been immune to their relations with other places. Many are no longer in out of the way places; their proximity to large urban centres has meant they have become dormitory suburbs. At Makara, on the east coast near Wellington, the notion of a weekend retreat had all but disappeared by the 1970s and over the last decade there have been significant changes in ownership of the baches.

*An older generation of bach owners has died or become too frail to manage their properties: the last of a long line of Italian fishermen working the coast died in 1991. The cottages have attracted a different sort of owner - lawyers, journalists, artists, writers and café owners - many of whom live at the beach permanently, commuting into the city to work [but] the newcomers have no intention of changing Makara. Driving over the hill is like falling back into the 1950's; they like it that way, passionately (Legat 1997:88).*

It is perhaps these different sorts of owners, particularly the journalists, artists and writers, who are partly responsible for changing our ideas about the bach. The next chapter considers the changing representations of the bach.

## Chapter 5 Representations of the Bach Landscape

Representations of the bach proliferate and reverberate, ideas first suggested by architectural writers are quickly taken up by writers in popular magazines who amplify and distort particular themes. One of the most popular themes is that the bach symbolises an egalitarian era of frontier individualism and freedom from bureaucracy. Egalitarian discourses centre around two separate but interrelated ideas; almost everyone could afford to build or own one, and even those who could have afforded more palatial holiday homes, preferred a simple bach.

The egalitarian nature of the bach is often entangled with the idea of the bach as a specifically kiwi invention, a native species that evolved only on New Zealand's coasts. As with many native species it is now considered endangered, threatened by both the bureaucracy it thumbed its nose at, and the renunciation of an egalitarian past. As coastal property becomes the preserve of millionaires, baches are either modified beyond recognition or demolished to make way for the high rises or holiday mansions.

That architectural discussions of these mansions often reference the bach suggests the bach's ongoing mythic power to inspire both architects and the potential clients, and is said to give these new designs authenticity. This is not a new phenomenon, however baches are said to have inspired architects since at least the late 1950s, but they have also provoked a reaction against 'New Zealand architecture's obsession with simple buildings to explain itself' Mathewson (2001:483).

Nor has the bach been entirely venerated, indeed for a number of architects in the 1940s and 1950s the bach was the epitome of 'unconscious enslavement to suburban dogma' (To bach 1950:17) which created a 'blot on the landscape' (Don't Let 1950:32). The resulting eyesores could however be improved if sensible design approaches were followed. The aesthetic of baches has been an enduring concern, among both the architectural elite and the popular imagination. Their aesthetics becomes a justification for their retention or removal.

## 5.1 Types of Literature

There has been a steady stream of articles in popular magazines, influential television advertisements with bach backdrops, books about baches, bach holiday guides and a documentary on baches as well as an increasing contribution from academic writers primarily in the field of architecture, anthropology, public history and sociology. The lifestyle magazines articles tend to fall into three categories, firstly personal memoirs of spending summers on the beach in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (eg Jefferies 1991). The second group of articles although they may contain personal memoirs, are largely celebrations of the bach as kiwi icon, also often evoking it as a precursor of contemporary holiday house design (eg Pearson 2001), and finally the most recent articles look at the bach as real estate and investment potential, either hyping or lamenting the prospect (eg Heeringa 2001). The bach has also been a recurring theme in architecture magazines and scholarly journals since at least the 1940s, but how it has been portrayed has varied markedly ranging from veneration to disgust.

The changing representations of the bach are clearly highlighted in the only two popular books about baches. Paul Thompson's book *The Bach* (1985) shows the bach as an artefact, usually in a natural or unkempt setting. There are no people in any of the photos, no cars, or roads, or letterboxes. In fact there is very little sign of habitation at all. Matthewson (2001) notes that these are all conventions of architectural photography.

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Fig 11 The recent face of Baylys Beach in (Male 2001)



Kevin Male's book *Good Old Kiwi Baches and a Few Cribs Too* (2001) on the other hand, celebrates a living bach culture, where half the photos have people in them, and even more have signs of habitation. The bach is no longer just the holiday home but has become more permanently occupied. (See Fig 11)

Thompson's book can be seen as hymn to a way of life and a building that is passing, and where the bach is enclosed by nature, while Male highlights the ongoing nature of bach life and suggests that modern baches are still possible. Both, however, argue that the 'feel' of the place is important. These changing representations seem to parallel changing ideas about what constitutes the heritage of the bach. There have also been other persistent themes that have meant the bach carries a heavy symbolic load.

## **5.2 Egalitarian**

Because bach living was unpretentious, often beyond the reach of authorities and seemingly available to anyone who could find a remote stretch of beach or river, it came to be regarded as a quintessentially egalitarian activity. 'Until recently and regardless of income, nearly anybody could have their own "second shed", as long as they were content with the most basic of baches – one room and minimal comforts' (Thompson 1985:10). The bach's association with egalitarianism has made it a powerful symbol of a past way of life, but there have been various versions of what was egalitarian about the bach.

The choice for Wilson, writing in 1957 is between, 'the senseless chaos of building types which make a nightmare of places like Piha' and 'waterside settlements of carefully laid out, fully standardised cottages'. This is because, 'baches should be as unpretentious and as inconspicuous, as informal and as egalitarian as we all should be and want to be, else why would we go to the seaside' (1957:28).

The 'fully standardised cottages' Wilson envisages are already being made by an Auckland company called Lockwood Buildings Ltd. and he thinks it would be good if they 'could be bought off the hook like lawnmowers or refrigerators' (1957:29). All that remains is to 'surround a settlement of such units with pine trees, lupin shelter

screens, winding in and out amongst the dunes and one would have a really first class New Zealander's holiday resort' (ibid.).

It is interesting how the notion of egalitarianism has been subverted from building a bach from found or cheap materials with the help of your neighbours, to buying one 'off the hook' because the 'normal social distinctions are irrelevant at the beach'. I am reminded of Ian Wedde's discussion of landscape conventions where, far from being stylish, Lockwood homes are beyond the pale equated with the kitsch of 'stag at bay doors and country music'. and 'country is what you see ...where the Lockwood homes thin out'(1987:14).

For other writers, it was the social interaction that occurred in settlements precisely because they were not carefully laid out, that made baches egalitarian. David Thom argues in 1973 that new coastal subdivisions 'reduced the social mingling across geographic, social, occupational and income lines which had been part of the egalitarian way in the bach communities' (1973:55).

Famous people, who could have afforded more sophisticated accommodation, also lend the bach an egalitarian flavour, particularly when he's the Prime Minister.

*The most famous building on the Hibiscus Coast used to be the bach the Muldoon family had at Hatfield's Beach. Every year in the silly season there would be photographs of the Prime Minister enjoying his summer break, and reports of the State of the Nation speech he gave each January to the Orewa Rotary... It was a very typical little 1950s bach, up a right-of-way off an undistinguished road and by no means close to the sea. There is a story that some American dignitary arriving in a limousine drove around in circles for some time unable to believe he had arrived at the right place, and that his secret-service minder was stationed at the gate in the boiling sun, much to the amusement of the locals passing with surfboards and sunburnt noses. It may or may not be true! (Grover in Male 2001:108) (See Fig 12)*

[ copyright clearance to reproduce figure not obtained ]

Fig 12 Robert Muldoon's bach Hatfields Beach

### 5.3 Indigenous

The egalitarian nature of the baches has often been linked to their New Zealand invention, the two ideas reinforce each other, but there are different claims for what is truly indigenous about the bach and crib. For some it is the building itself and the way they were built, for others it is the ubiquity of our experience of them that makes them unique, while a third group of writers suggest it's the way we use the bach that makes it so special.

Geoff Chapple, writing in the Listener in 1988, made the surest assertion that the Kiwi bach was our own creation. He argued that

*Just occasionally, New Zealand acts in a way which owes nothing to the exhortation of the public relations machine, nor to the importation of some foreign trend. The country may suddenly do something which seems to be both natural, and true to its character, as in the 1950s, when everyone built baches... this boom was te Pakeha at its best. The ungainly rash of seashore and lakeside construction owed nothing to British tradition. And it entirely pre-empted the idea American hippies would come to only in the 60s: that you can build with your own hands, and to your own design with cheap materials a shelter (Chapple 1988:14).*

Grover notes that the local historical society was unable to raise the money to buy the bach and it has since been 'improved to a standard more suitable for modern holidaymakers' (ibid). Stories like this give credence to the idea that the bach could only happen in New Zealand.

As we have seen from the international literature, building with ones 'own hands and to your own design, with cheap materials, a shelter' is not at all an unusual phenomenon. Whether they owed anything to British tradition, or were influenced by overseas trends is much harder to say, however building magazines of the day regularly offered house plans, and one 1946 article on baches in Home and Building had house plans of holiday homes from England, USA and Australia (Lets Resolve 1946). While the building itself may not be unique to New Zealand, it has been argued by several commentators that they are indigenous because we have all had experiences of them.

*Every New Zealander has been here, has done those things. We enjoy our baches, but we think of them as common or garden; they don't seem special to us. In fact they're as specific and indigenous as Taumaranui on the main trunk line (Cox 1995:39).*

Cook notes that our long coastline gave our small population many beautiful places to hide away and that we

*have built baches everywhere – there are said to be more than 40,000 of them. They are woven into our national consciousness more closely than the villa or the state house, and far more closely than their equivalents in other countries (Cook 2002:64)*

Again this is an assertion that is hard to test, but the figure of 40,000 crops up regularly both attributed to Thompson (1985) and as in this case unattributed. What Cook fails to acknowledge is that the figure includes holiday houses and that of the 40,000 'the majority of these are not baches in the original sense (Thompson 1985:10). Belich suggests that the bach along with the beach, boat and barbecue 'were one populist New Zealand engagement with the landscape' (2001:528). He notes that in the 1970's 12% of households in middle class suburb of Khandallah owned a holiday home whereas in the neighbouring working class suburb of Johnsonville only 4% owned a holiday home.

Exactly how many of these holiday homes are likely to be a bach in the original sense is impossible to tell, but it does suggest you had a far greater chance of having this quintessential New Zealand experience if you came from a middle class background.

Cook asserts that we use the outside of the bach in our own peculiar way

*We use it as if it were a straightforward extension of the inside....that, rain and weather permitting we will happily locate our activities outside as inside. (2002:64)*

This is possible because unlike other countries with rustic holiday home cultures New Zealand is a safe place with a 'benign climate and no borders, wars or dangerous fauna'(ibid)

Cook in an earlier article argues that the

*Living area around the bach, which was an enjoyed and integral part of the building [and] is what made of the bach, the people and the site an organic unified whole. (1996:27) See fig 13*

If the surroundings of the bach are a uniquely New Zealand adaptation, that is integral to the whole, and they share the same on going characteristics of the bach, then they should also be seen as part of the baches heritage. This raises questions both about how they are considered in heritage assessments and their on-going management. As is often the case with things thought to be indigenous though, baches are also under threat of removal.

[ copyright clearance to reproduce figure not obtained ]

Fig 13 Outdoor Cooking Area (in Male 2001)

#### **5.4 Threatened**

That this uniquely New Zealand experience is threatened is attested by a growing number of writers (Patchett 1997, McDonald 2002, Ansley 2000a, Cox 1995 Chapple 1988, Pearson 2000, Farrant 1999). It was also felt by bach owners themselves when Thompson surveyed the bach,

*Many people tell me of places where baches are threatened...Whether the threat is real or merely a projection of the bach owners fears about*

*not being able to stay in their own quiet spot, I don't know but it was a frequent topic of conversation. (1985:3)*

The threat however depends in large part on whether they were established in a subdivision or on public land and also on the location.

Some baches on public land are still below the radar of local authorities and are accepted because they make so little impact or have not been complained about, such as Maori Gardens (Baxter 2001). On the other hand, baches in prominent positions on public land (like those on Rangitoto Island) have been threatened with removal since at least 1937, when further building was prohibited and a 20 year period of grace was agreed before private ownership should cease and the baches be removed (Farrant 1999).

On private land, the main threat comes from developers and owners themselves. In desirable coastal locations on the Coromandel and at Mt Maunganui the price of land has sky rocketed. Mt Maunganui real estate agent Murray Rhodes 'knows all the waterfront baches, and has seen many of them bowled in recent years for big developments' (Hawkes 2001:13). He puts the market value of Marine Parade baches at \$700,000 or more and the coastal property boom is repeated all over the country, Ansley noted that in 2002 a two bedroomed Lockwood home in Mt Maunganui sold for \$1.8 million and was resold three weeks later for \$2.1 million (Ansley 2002c).

As well as being demolished, baches are frequently renovated by the owners. As McDonald says in his 'Listener' editorial ,

*To be fair, had I been lucky enough to inherit one of those blessed patches of land I too might have been tempted to sell it or develop it and thus consign one more collection of sticks and stones and tin to the dustbin of social history (2002:5)*

What is striking about these stories of demise is how the bach has become equated with a native fauna. It also illustrates how a description of specifically located baches is generalised, and with repetition becomes taken for granted.

Bryan Patchett, writing in the Historic Places Trust magazine, entitled his article about Rangitoto baches, 'A Endangered Coastal Species' (1997:25). Several years

later Pearson's article suggested, in a highlighted heading, that 'despite its now recognised place in our architectural heritage the bach is an endangered species' (2001:109). The following year the 'Listener' front cover of the January 19 issue utilises a photo of a Rangitoto bach with the headline: 'End of the Golden Weather: Why the Great Kiwi Bach is an Endangered Species'. In his editorial in this issue, McDonald notes that, 'like a lot of native species, the bach is on the endangered list. It has become a symbol not just of the way we were, but of who we are becoming' (2002:5). The sub-heading of Ansley's article in the same issue of 'The Listener' says 'The classic kiwi bach – or crib is an endangered species due to council rules and DoC ideologies, its survival or extinction will tell us a lot about who we really are' (2002a:16). The use of nature conservation language appears to be inspired by the powerful hold the environment has on the public imagination in New Zealand. Warren-Findley notes that some heritage professionals have suggested that we 'need to devise a "kakapo strategy"...for the rapidly disappearing stock of human heritage sites, structures and landscapes' (2001:26)

Along with council rules and DoC ideologies, MacDonald adds 'a combination of rigorous bylaws, building codes, conservation priorities and (not least) changing economic factors' (2002:5) as possible causes for the baches extinction. Architect Nigel Cook also suggests that as 'far as planners are concerned, old baches don't confirm to modern building regulations' (2002:63). This all rather suggests a picture of bureaucracy gone mad, but what I hope to show in chapter six is that the rise and supposedly fall of the bach has a complex history, which has relied as much on councils and their staff turning a blind eye or being permissive as it has of enforcing regulations. Local Authorities and the Department of Conversation have also often been responding to pressures from particular groups in the community rather than initiating action themselves. Perhaps it is because the bach is seen as both indigenous and threatened, that it has inspired modern architects.

## **5.5 Inspiration**

In their survey of New Zealand architecture since 1945 entitled *The Elegant Shed*, David Mitchell and Gillian Chaplin argue for the prime influence of unpretentious buildings like the bach in post war architecture; 'There is scarcely a New Zealand

architect who does not admire simple farm buildings, tramper huts and old style baches. Many will say they owe their best ideas to the experience of unpretentious buildings such as these' (Mitchell and Chaplin 1986:8) See Fig 14

[ copyright clearance to reproduce figure not obtained ]

Fig 14 The bach at Piha, which hung in the Auckland School of Architecture from the 1950s onwards

Clark and Walker in their recent survey of an unfinished book project about the 1940s and 1950s architecture, however, warn against the uncritical conflation of vernacular bach building with modern architecture of the time, which has been prevalent in recent architectural discussions about the bach. They argue that this reiteration of the primitive 'is clearly played out in the nostalgic cult of the bach – identified as an icon of 'New Zealandness' and venerated for its so called indigenous and egalitarian qualities, for its do-it-yourself attitude (2000:33). This call does not stop modern architectural writers from referencing the bach though.



As Graeme Lay would have it

*the traditional Kiwi beachside bach is not dead: it is mutating, changing into something which is as quintessentially New Zealand as its forbear. After all, bach owners are still driven by the same imperatives to escape temporarily from the pressures of work and urban life to be soothed by the seas proximity in a house where informality rules. 'Lifestyle' is the word coined to sum this up and while the fibrolite and corrugated iron bach has become an endangered architectural species, its replacement genus features some of our most exhilarating house designs (Lay 2001:33).*

If proximity to the sea and informality are the main prerequisites then almost any building near the coast could qualify as a bach. The architect also cites the influence of Greek fishing villages, which seems about as plausible. Nigel Cook suggests that there is some mana to be gained from referencing the bach in recent architectural commentary, but 'most of what is written is nonsense; the houses bear little relationship to baches except they are often holiday homes' (2002:63)

## **5.6 Eyesores**

Aesthetic concerns about baches were prominent in 1940s and 1950s architectural magazines in New Zealand. While they may represent a rather limited sample of writing about the bach in that period, the similarity of their tone suggests they represented widely shared views. They exhorted readers; *Don't let next summers bach be a blot on the landscape (Don't Let 1950:32)*

While the Government may have been willing to put up with lower building standards for baches, anonymous contemporary architectural writers were not. Articles with titles such as *Let's Resolve to Design our Weekend Cottages with Taste and Efficiency: Don't Uglyfy Coasts and Hillsides (1946)*, and *Don't Let Next Summer's Bach be a Blot on the Landscape (1950)* and *To Bach but not to Botch (1950)* clearly suggest both a dislike of the types of buildings being built and their impact on the natural surroundings. There is however a tension in the editorial of *To Bach but not to Botch (1950)* which argued that,

*...unsightly destruction of the natural environment by bach builders was a result of thoughtlessness, unconscious enslavement to suburban dogma... and the legacy of pioneering days when our forefathers hacked houses and settlements out of the wilderness, when fire, saw and axe ruthlessly destroyed thousands of forest acres. The inevitable demands of civilisation, of course, cannot be denied. We must cut down some of the bush and continue to build new holiday homes. But there must not be too great a sacrifice of natural beauty (To Bach 1950:17)*

Much of the rest of the article appears to be talking about post WWII subdivisions where the baches are 'compressed duplications of their owners permanent homes, with too many unnecessary features of the latter and not enough of the special requirements of comfortable living and relaxation' (ibid). Rather than the earlier baches sited in relation to the landscape (Thom 1973)

The tone of the 1946 article appears to be touting for business and trying to induce a snobbish reaction among the wealthy city dwellers who are seen as potential clients,

*While building restrictions prevent the erection of holiday cottages at present, plans can be prepared for the time when these restrictions will cease. It is unfortunately a fact that too many people who take considerable trouble building strikingly attractive suburban homes pay little attention to the appearance of their baches, and many drab and ugly structures mar the beauty of our coasts lakes and mountainsides. Particularly in recent years has this lack of architectural taste been shown, for in lieu of usual building materials unobtainable through war conditions, people have resorted to makeshift structures which can only be described as shacks (Let's Resolve 1946:17).*

The clearest statement of alternatives for coastal buildings comes from Bill Wilson's 1957 article in *Home and Building* entitled "A Holiday by the Sea". He suggests that '[O]ur national image of "holiday" is a bach by the seaside. How uniquely New Zealand is the word "bach". And what a vast eyesore of the makeshift the impoverished and the jerry built it calls to mind' (1957:28). As we

have already seen, what Wilson preferred was Lockwood Homes surrounded by pines and lupins. These early tirades against the way the bach looked, combined with environmental concerns to start influencing official responses to bach settlements.

## Chapter 6 Official Responses to Bach Settlements

Initially most authorities did not view baches unfavourably, however there does seem to have been a long standing dislike of shoddy baches which were labelled 'shacks'. Gradually other concerns became prominent, and the bach was no longer viewed as a natural part of the coastline by the authorities who managed the coast.

### 6.1 Acceptance, Encouragement or Ignorance

As we have already seen with a number of bach settlements on public land the official reaction was often to turn a blind eye for as long as possible. Huts in one form or another had occupied the foreshore at Taylors Mistake for approximately thirty years before the Mayor of Sumner Borough Council investigated the situation in 1910 and,

*...on the whole found nothing objectionable...the dwellings are a considerable distance apart and are of a character to convey the impression that the dwellers intend to use same for a considerable period and possibly from time to time to sell them to others. We suggest that the occupiers names should be ascertained and that some form of license should be taken out by them to prevent anything like a vested interest, and as a safeguard that the owners will be responsible for good order being maintained. The license fee should it is thought be merily (sic) nominal say 2/6 for each dwelling. The Mayor (E. Denham) (quoted in Marquet1998:4-5).*

Marquet goes on to note that the license fee was raised to 20 shillings and that the council sometimes had difficulty collecting it, so in future they required two testimonials to the character of would-be bach builders before licenses were granted (ibid). While the council clearly wanted to exert some control over the baches and possibly raise income, the baches were not seen to have a detrimental effect on public access or the environment.

Concern at making an income seems to have been the main worry for some authorities. The Rangitoto Island Domain Board consistently argued that the baches

should stay, because they provided the only income for making improvements on the Island (Linzey 1998). At Maori Gardens the Department of Lands and Survey's coastal investigation of the area noted that 'although the County Clerk has no knowledge of any permission to occupy the land having been given, rates are collected on the properties' (1982:14).

Another piece of evidence that suggests baches were officially tolerated was that the 1947 Housing Improvement Regulations which set out what standards new and existing buildings must comply with, expressly exempted, 's53c: Any house which between the 1<sup>st</sup> day of April and the last day of November in every year is not occupied or is occupied only occasionally for periods not exceeding one month at a time' (quoted in Hill 1988:11).

Official responses often attempted to give the baches subsequent legitimacy. The first baches appeared at Lake Alexandrina, a high country lake esteemed for its trout fishing, thanks to the goodwill of the runholder (a pastoral lessee) in the 1920s. Over the next two decades many more fishing huts were established without any authority on legal, unformed road. In 1947 and 1948 two Reserves for Fishing Purposes were declared under the Public Reserves and Domain Act 1928 and the administering authority, South Canterbury Acclimatization Society, undertook to move all illegal huts on to the reserves (Department of Lands and Survey et al 1980a). The new reserves effectively took on the character of a subdivision and by 1980 the option of removing all the huts was regarded as 'not really feasible today given the history of the development of the hut settlement' (Department of Lands and Survey et al 1980b:3) although reducing the numbers of huts was seen as clearly desirable, mainly for sewage pollution reasons (ibid:5).

At Ocean Beach, a rugged and windswept part of the southern Wairarapa Coast that 'could be kindly described as exposed', (Thompson 1985:42) 48 baches had been built during the 1950s. It took until 1958 for the Featherston County Council to notice the baches and alert the Commissioner for Crown Lands, who surveyed the site and found they had been illegally established on Crown land, State Forest Land and Public Road. (Douglas 1989) Interestingly the Council approved retrospective building permits for some of the newly discovered baches in 1959 prior to the results

of the survey being known. This suggests the Council were initially favourably disposed towards the baches but 'by April 1961 the Department of Lands and Survey notified Featherston County Council that approval was given to take joint action requesting the owners to shift their buildings within a 20 year period' (Douglas 1989:21).

This highlights a common theme of illicitly established bach communities - the extended removal period. They usually take the form of ten, twenty, thirty-year and lifetime leases and just as commonly the bach settlement continues on to another lease or form of tenure. The Tongaporutu baches were given a 30-year lease in 1975 and bach owners are currently in negotiation with the Department of Conservation and the local council while the Ocean Beach bach owners received lifetime leases in 1988. This persistence in the face of official opposition appears to be unrivalled in contemporary New Zealand, but environmental groups have continued to point out the environmental impacts of baches, and influence official decisions.

## **6.2 Environmental Concerns**

The environment had become an issue on Rangitoto Island by the 1930s, where the baches were sited amongst the unique ecology of recent volcanic activity. Although none of the plants are themselves rare it is the way that pohutukawa trees have colonised bare lava that makes the island so unique. It was this uniqueness that led the Auckland Institute and Museum to express its concern in 1935 about devastation caused by the bach-holders introducing fauna and flora to the island and by 5 March 1937, Cabinet banned the erection of further baches and gave the existing bach-holders 20 years to vacate the remove their baches (Yoffe 2000).

It is, however, questionable how much ecological impact the bach-holders actually had. In the late 1800s the Reid brothers who farmed Motutapu and were friends with Sir George Grey on Kawau Island had introduced wallaby and opossums both of which readily crossed to Rangitoto and thrived, to the point the bach-holders could not grow anything in vegetable gardens unless they were completely wallaby proof (Yoffe 2000). In 1897 the Mayor of Devonport had proposed 'to liven up the grim grandeur of the mountain with nasturtiums, geraniums, sweet peas and bulbs' (quoted in Yoffe 2000:23), and despite opposition a school Arbor Day planting was

undertaken for the 'purpose of planting shrubs and sowing seeds' (ibid). Pine trees were already establishing from seed that had blown on to the island before the bachholders started to bring succulents for their gardens, which did indeed thrive in their new surroundings.

Interestingly, now that opossum and wallaby have been eradicated and the succulents are being painstakingly removed, the only lasting ecological impact of the bachholders is that their long-drops dug into the scoria have percolated through to the roots of the pohutukawas nearby and caused them to grow much larger (G. Farrant pers comm). While bach settlements were objected to by some architects, and if they were in outstandingly important ecological landscapes, they were not seen as a national issue by 1960 when J.T. Salmon's book *Heritage Destroyed: The Crisis of Scenery Preservation in New Zealand*, was published. This polemic primarily addressed the destruction being wrought on the countryside by hydro-electric development and followed on from the thwarted National Conference on the Conservation of New Zealand Scenic Attractions hosted by the Government in 1959. The conference had little impact because '...at the beginning the Chairman informed the meeting that nothing the conference said or did would be allowed to stand between the Government and its plans' (Salmon 1960:41). These plans included raising Lake Manapouri, which has been credited with igniting the environmental movement in New Zealand. (Peat 1993).

Salmon does not explicitly mention bach settlements but in 'before and after' photographs of the lovely Lake Waikaremoana there is a small bach settlement in 1937 which remains in the 1958 photographs, but it is the wide mud flats left by receding waters (Salmon 1960 opposite page 33) which are objected to by Salmon.

At the end of the 1960s the threats to coastline scenery were being acknowledged and in his opening address to the Institute of Surveyors Coastal Development conference in 1969 the Minister of Lands and Forests, Duncan Macintyre, recognised the problem of baches, 'Hidden in the forest a lone corrugated-iron hut with outside pit toilet may be all right. On an open beach it is an eyesore. And if there are many of them a naturally beautiful area can degenerate into a shantytown' (1969:3). He went on to emphasise that he could 'see nothing wrong with people owning holiday homes'

(ibid) but questioned 'the wisdom of allowing ownership of property with a sea frontage to confer exclusive rights to enjoy the seashore' (ibid). Again it seems that aesthetic dislike and freeholding of the coastline were the major problems but sewage disposal was also identified as problematic and this issue came to the fore at Taylors' Mistake in the mid 1970's.

Several newspaper articles appeared highlighting the lack of adequate sewage disposal of baches at Taylors Mistake, which swayed public opinion. (Hill 1988). These included one in the Christchurch Star written by Bruce Ansley which began with the statement, 'I am busy composing a notice for Taylors Mistake next summer. Something like: 'It would be prudent, when swimming in these waters, to keep ones mouth shut tight'. That is, I might add, if lockjaw hasn't already set in' (quoted in Hill 1988:47-48).

The Christchurch City Council responded to this and other pressure by requiring all baches to install electric toilets, and it was the cave baches that didn't have electricity that were finally demolished on 27 November 1979. Incidentally Bruce Ansley now a prominent journalist with 'The Listener' says his views about the baches have changed 180 degrees and that he now deeply regrets the loss of the cave baches (B. Ansley, pers comm).

### **6.3 Concerns about Private Occupation of Public Land**

While environmental concerns grabbed headlines, there was also increasing scrutiny of baches built on public land. The approach of the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park Board, which assumed management control of the baches on Rangitoto Island in 1968, highlights these changing concerns.

Bachholders had been given an initial 20-year lease with notice to vacate and remove by 31 March 1957. This was modified to a 33-year lease with right of renewal in 1956 but with removal of baches upon death of the leaseholder. There were still 98 bachholders when the new leases were signed (Ombler 1996).

The Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park Board's (HGMPB), annual reports listed 89 baches remaining in 1971, 50 remained in 1978 and had reduced to 35 by 1985(cited in Linzey 1998). The board stated that it has 'inherited the problem of illegally erected



buildings dating back to the 1920's. The board states that it is 'not prepared to extend leases beyond the death of the lessees despite continued protest from lessees and their families' (Linzey 1998:item 47). Linzey noted that

*[The] Park Board displays no interest in the architectural or heritage significance of the baches, stating only that they are illegal, a nuisance and that it will continue its policy of removal whenever the opportunity arises. (ibid.)*

The Department of Conservation's Regional Conservator outlined the Park Board's policy towards the baches once lessees had died;

1. *Baches in reasonable condition were used for either departmental purposes or community use. One bach was converted into shop/information centre, and two more were allocated on an informal basis to the 1<sup>st</sup> Devonport Scout Group and 1<sup>st</sup> Warkworth Company Boys Brigade.*
2. *Baches in poorer condition were dismantled and the materials made available to other bach owners for use on their own baches/*
3. *Baches in a very decayed condition were burnt down and the foundations blasted (Ombler 1996:3)*

George Farrant, a heritage planner with Auckland City Council, noted that 'all you get is Vietnam craters and twisted steel' (pers comm). This policy continued until 1990, when the Department of Conservation took over management of the baches (Ombler 1996)

In 1976 Christchurch City Council established a policy of allowing baches at Taylors Mistake to remain for 10 years and issued licences in 1979. Also in 1979 several bach holders lodged objections on the District Scheme Review, arguing that it did not adequately recognise and provide for the existing bach community. This was turned down by both Christchurch City Council and on appeal to the Planning Tribunal (in Guthrie 1993)

With the 1986 deadline looming Christchurch City Council released a discussion document in November 1985 entitled *Guidelines for the Recreational Development*

*and Management of Taylors Mistake* which among other things suggested a Residential Holiday Zone in the valley that the bach holders could relocate to, which would require a scheme change. (in Guthrie 1993) This appears to be quite a turnaround and one of the bach holders involved in discussions with the Christchurch City Council suggests it had a lot to do with the particular people involved.

Respondent *It was a take it or leave it situation as the bach holders signed the ten year thing but a lot of them put a letter in saying that they were signing under duress, you know, that they weren't too happy with what they were signing and pointing out that the Council sort of refused to consider any more negotiation.*

Interviewer *Who in the Council was involved*

Respondent *Oh a very strong man (name mentioned)....he was really determined to get an end to it and he was the one we were negotiating with. We had councillors quite favourably disposed to us, well some councillors but at the end of the ten years (name mentioned ) had moved on and the people who replaced him weren't quite as dogmatic and determined.*

Respondent continues *We were getting some bad publicity... We lobbied the councillors and we got to know them quite well... it finished up with the Council telling us 'We don't mind the baches in the bay but you're on public land. You can't stay there'. You know its paper road, the Queens chain and they said 'Why don't you buy some land from the landowner in the bay and move on to that'.*

Taylors Mistake Association Land Company purchased 73 hectares in the valley and proposed setting up a Bach Zone on 3 hectares and donating the remaining 70 hectares to Christchurch City Council. The subsequent hearing of this proposal, as Scheme Change 32, under Commission Milligan in May 1990, recommends the rejection of Scheme Change 32 (Creation of Holiday Bach Zone), which was appealed to the Planning Tribunal by bach holders, who subsequently approached Christchurch City Council proposing mediation.

The Taylors Mistake Mediation Working Party (The Mediation) began in late 1991 with Christchurch City Council, Department of Conservation, Canterbury Regional Council and Taylors Mistake Association (bachholders), significantly those opposed to the baches refused to be involved, arguing among other things that, 'public land is not a negotiable commodity'(Evidence of D Evans to Commissioner Marquet 1998).

The Department of Conservation set up in 1987 and its predecessor the Department of Lands and Survey have always been more opposed to baches on public land than local authorities, especially ones that were built without permission as was the case at Ocean Beach in the Wairarapa. The two departments spent most of the 1980's trying to demolish the baches at Ocean Beach before the then Minister of Conservation Helen Clark stepped in and allowed the baches to stay on lifetime leases. (Douglas 1989) This meant the owners could stay until they died or no longer wanted the baches and their families would be responsible for removing the bach.

At Maori Gardens the Department of Lands and Survey Coastal Reserves Investigation noted that

*[The] five holiday cottages, which appear to be on the legal road at Maori Gardens without permission, monopolize the only flat land behind the beach. This beach should not give the impression of being the private domain of a few individuals, and it is desirable that the cottages be removed...It is anticipated that removal of the cottages would encourage more use of the beach by people arriving by boat (Department of Lands and Survey 1982:15).*

By the late 1960s concerns about private occupation of public land were being dwarfed by concerns about the impacts of coastal subdivisions, which had been occurring since the early 1950s.

#### **6.4 Preservation of the Natural Character of the Coast: concerns about subdivision**

In the 1960s the subdivision of the coasts was on a scale that had not previously been experienced. David Thom argues that the subdivisions were more

*concerned with yield (that is, profit on the investment) rather than abstractions like the quality of the coastal landscape. The pattern of growth set up was fundamentally different from the earlier one. Previous decisions on siting had been made over a period of time, each one considering the dwelling location in relation to the environment. But*

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Fig 15 'The most serious casualty of the whole business is the sense of freedom, (Thom 1973:55)

*siting was now imposed over land and sand (1973:52) See fig 15*

As this situation became increasingly apparent to professional scientists, engineers, planners, surveyors, architects and environmental activists during the 1960's, a number of important conferences started to address the issue of coastal development (Healy 1980). These included the Physical Environment Committee of the National Development Conference 1969, which recommended 'That Government take urgent action to develop planning and policy solutions to control subdivisions in coastal and lakeshore areas' (Quoted in Healy 1980:256).

These imperatives were echoed in the Coastal Development Conference of the Institute of Surveyors (1969), the Physical Environment Conference (1972) and the "How can New Zealand Best Use its Coastal Heritage?" seminar convened by the Coromandel County in 1970 (Healy 1980). The institute of Surveyors conference appeared to be particularly concerned about the appearance of sprawl. (see fig 16)

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Fig 16 Large sections "contribute a great deal to the apparent sprawl", J.S. Gillam (1969)

The initial response from Government was the formulation of policy and planning techniques for Coastal Development (Ministry of Works 1972) and to amend the Town and Country Planning Act (1973), which made 'preserving the natural

character of the natural environment', a matter of national importance.

Many of the critics were also in favour of a Maritime Planning Authority. This would take over the management of the coastline from the small under-staffed local authorities, and indeed one was almost set up under the Coastal Moratorium and Management Bill in May 1975 but the Bill failed to make it into legislation (Maplesden and Boffa Miskell 2000). The 'preservation of the natural character of the coast' has continued to be an important part of planning legislation under the RMA1991. This act also strengthened the requirement for public access to the coast and waterways, also making them a matter of national importance under [s6(d)]

### **6.5 Public access**

The debates in the 1970's were perhaps pivotal in gradually changing New Zealander's views about the coasts, and highlighting the perils of rampant subdivision. When public access to the coast was talked about, however, it was usually in terms of freehold subdivision alienating land rather than the private occupation of public land, which was often regarded as more in keeping with the environment. Here is David Thom in the book *Seacoast in the Seventies*, outlining the character of these earlier bach settlements,

*Small groups of baches grew in desirable places generally close to the parent community. Most of the early baches were small and built of weatherboards. They were thus relatively impermanent and generally compatible with the landscape. Their siting could be considered anew as each was added and clusters grew up with a freedom unknown today. Roads were tracks on the ground, tank water was collected from the roof, there was an outdoor privy and no power or telephone. If mistakes were made in these settlements, they could be put right, since no bach was worth too much to pull down. They had other important qualities too: their absolute and direct purpose was leisure by the sea. As little capital was needed, the choice of this kind was open to many (1973:50).*

This characterization is however vigorously disputed by various environmental groups, in particular Public Access New Zealand (PANZ). They describe the situation at Taylors Mistake as ‘a legacy of civic dereliction’ and suggest that

*[This] has been a classic case of a battle over the commons, of conflict between public and private interest, and of local government equivocation on issues that have long been resolved in law. There are salutary lessons for the rest of New Zealand... PANZ believes that physical detracting of the environment and degraded public recreational opportunities are plain to see and totally unacceptable. They are long overdue for permanent resolution (PANZ 1994 Pamphlet)*

The ‘Mediated Solution’ at Taylors Mistake, which PANZ are so opposed to, primarily addressed issues of access and recreation but balanced them against heritage values. Although Commissioner Guthrie (1993) supported PANZ’s contentions, two subsequent hearings have shown that it has not ‘long been resolved in law’, and the issues are not ‘plain to see’. The next chapter looks at the most recent official response to bach settlements; considering them heritage.

## **Chapter 7**

### **What should be Preserved? Approaches to Heritage at Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island.**

There are currently two areas where bach settlements have been registered as 'historic areas' by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT), 'The Row' at Taylors Mistake, registered in October 1995 (Wilson 1998), and the three settlements of Beacon End, Rangitoto Wharf, and Islington Bay on Rangitoto Island, which were registered in April 1997, (Farrant 1999). Registration does not guarantee protection, it merely alerts controlling bodies to 'have particular regard' to the registration, and Trust's Recommendations (Vossler 2000:63).

Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island provide interesting comparative case studies of bach heritage management, because of their different histories of administration. The Taylors Mistake baches are on unformed legal road administered by Christchurch City Council, (CCC) while Rangitoto Island is a Scenic Reserve administered by the Department of Conservation (DoC). Before I outline the various approaches to heritage that have been proposed and/or adopted in these two areas it is necessary to briefly survey the legislative and administrative landscape of heritage management in New Zealand and the role of ICOMOS.

#### **7.1 International Guidance: The ICOMOS New Zealand Charter**

Legislation and administration of heritage in New Zealand is influenced by the non-statutory guidelines of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites, a UNESCO affiliate). The New Zealand version called the ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places and Cultural Heritage Value (The Charter) guides the actions of national and local agencies, as well as funders such as the Lotteries Environment and Heritage Committee (McLean 2000). The Charter is broad in scope, dealing with 'places of cultural heritage values relating to its indigenous and its more recent peoples. These areas, landscapes and features, buildings, structures and gardens, archaeological and traditional sites, and sacred places and monuments are treasures of distinctive value' (ICOMOS New Zealand 1993). It outlines the purpose of conservation, recognises the importance of indigenous heritage to identity and sets out appropriate methodologies of conservation practice, including the



importance of researching documentary and oral history, and ongoing community consultation (ibid).

The Charter then sets out General Principles of Conservation and Conservation Processes. There are several general principles that are particularly relevant in any discussion of such heritage. These include

#### 5. Respect for Existing Evidence

The evidence of time and the contribution of all periods should be respected in conservation. The material of a particular period may be obscured or removed if assessment shows that this would not diminish the cultural heritage of the place.

#### 6 Setting

The historical setting of a place should be conserved with the place itself. The extent of the appropriate setting may be affected by constraints other than the heritage value.

#### 8. Relocation

The site of an historic structure is usually an integral part of the cultural heritage value. Relocation however can be a legitimate part of the conservation process where assessment shows that:

- i. the site is not of associative value (an exceptional circumstance)
- ii. relocation is the only means of saving the structure.
- iii. Relocation provides continuity of cultural heritage value.

#### 10. Contents

Where the contents of a place contribute to its cultural heritage value, they should be regarded as an integral part of the place and be conserved with it.

## Conservation Processes

### 13. Degrees of Intervention

Conservation may involve, an increasing extent of intervention: non-intervention, maintenance stabilisation, repair, restoration, reconstruction or adaptation. Where appropriate, conservation processes may be applied to parts or components of a structure or site.

The charter does not explicitly mention whether on going usage is appropriate but does mention that ‘conservation of a place of cultural heritage value is usually facilitated by it serving a socially, culturally or economically useful purpose’ (ibid) and that adaptation may be necessary to permit that use. These guidelines are intended to guide conservation practice, and while not explicitly related to legislation and assessment they do provide broad guidelines to those activities, I now turn to a brief survey of key heritage related legislation and administration.

### **7.2 Heritage Legislation and Administrative Structures**

The three key pieces of legislation governing heritage management in New Zealand are the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the Historic Places Act 1993 (HPA), and the Conservation Act 1987 (CA). There is also a range of other legislation that either directly or indirectly influences the management of heritage, such as the Reserves Act 1977 (Vossler 2000). The purpose of the RMA1991 is to ‘promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources [s5(1)]. Physical resources include structures, and those exercising responsibilities under the act, are required to ‘have particular regard’ to such matters as ‘the recognition and protection of the heritage values of sites, buildings, places or areas [s7(e)

The RMA1991 is administered by Regional Councils and Territorial Local Authorities (TLAs). Historic heritage is primarily addressed by TLAs, through the identification of important places or areas in a schedule/ register annexed to a District Plan, and the application of rules and associated resource consent procedures to these places (Vossler 2000). The power of TLAs to protect heritage is not unfettered as S32 places a duty on the authority to justify regulation and assess its costs and benefits. In preparing district plans the TLA is required to ‘have regard to any relevant entry in

the Historic Places Register' and similar obligations that exist in respect of management plans and strategies prepared under other Acts (ibid).

The Historic Places Act 1993 defines the New Zealand Historic Places Trust's role as both a statutory and non-statutory body. NZHPT has statutory authority for archaeological sites but also has an advocacy and membership service (Warren-Findley 2001). Its primary work focuses on the establishment of a system of registration for historic heritage and the control of any works that could adversely affect the relevant values associated with an archaeological site (Vossler 2000). The register comprises historic places, historic areas, waahi tapu and waahi tapu areas [s22] which can be assigned Category 1 or 11 status [s23(2)] depending on their importance. NZHPT owns very few of the 5000 or so sites it has registered so it has only a limited role in heritage management, but it does have an advocacy role in cases like Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island.

The Conservation Act 1987 established the Department of Conservation (DoC) and mandates it to assume a central role in the protection and management of natural and historic resources located both on and off the conservation estate. Recent policy, however, has essentially restricted its role to only those historic places and areas located on the conservation estate (Vossler 2000). This has been a contentious decision and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment notes that the act itself, 'makes no distinction between DoC advocacy functions on estate and off estate' (quoted in Vossler 2000:155).

The DoC identifies general policies and objectives that cover the totality of work undertaken at the conservancy scale through the use of Conservation Management Strategies. These are broadly focused and do not include detailed information, which is included in an area management plan that may be subsequently prepared for an area. Once prepared, DoC must 'administer and manage all conservation areas and natural and historic resources' in accordance with those strategies and plans [s17A]. DoC often only has limited staff with heritage expertise in each conservancy and historic resources receive only five percent of the budget so they tend to be outweighed by environmental issues (Warren-Findley 2001).

The historic heritage sector in New Zealand has been almost continually examined for the last 15 years, and each study has

*Identified structural problems relating to the legislative framework and the institutional arrangements that force the system into fragmented, duplicated, sometimes contradictory sets of practices (Warren-Findley 2001:35}*

The main emphasis of those proposals is to shift the focus for heritage towards land use regulation in the RMA 1991 and the new Resource Amendment Act 2003 elevates heritage to S6 Matters of National Importance. It remains to be seen whether this will improve heritage protection and management, but as I noted in Chapter 2 heritage workers have particular intellectual perspectives, which in large part influence their decisions about what should be considered heritage in first place. To see how this happens in action we now turn to case studies of the approaches to heritage issues at Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island.



Fig 17 Taylors Mistake Proposed Bach Zone. Baches to be demolished are on 'The Point'

### 7.3 Taylors Mistake: Approaches to Heritage

As we have seen earlier Taylors Mistake and surrounding bays shows signs of being inhabited, at least intermittently, since the early 1880s. Despite some fractious relations with Sumner Borough Council and its successor since 1945 Christchurch City Council (CCC), major changes did not occur until the 1970s, when sewerage pollution became a major issue, as it also did in other places in New Zealand. By the mid 1980s the Council viewed negotiations more favourably, and started mediation in 1992. The 'Meditated Solution' has formed the basis of arguments at two city planning hearings (under commissioners Guthrie 1993 Plan Change 3 and Marquet 1998) and a referral to the Environmental Court under Judge Smith in 2001). The 'Mediated Solution' proposed removing the 15 baches closest to the main Taylors Mistake beach and allowing the bach holders to relocate their baches or rebuild in a bach zone behind The Row (see Fig 17). The baches in Hobson Bay and Boulder Bay were allowed to stay, with the legal road to be altered to a dual classification of local purpose esplanade and historic reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. The heritage evidence presented to these hearings and the Commissioners' and Environment Court decisions outline the different approaches to heritage.

Heritage issues were not explicitly raised at the Milligan hearing, but the Historic Places Trust was invited to give evidence to The Mediation. One of the bach holders had approached both Christchurch City Council and Historic Places Trust requesting listing the baches as a historic precinct in 1991. The Christchurch City Council heard the proposed listing as Scheme Change 49, and rejected the proposal, concluding the buildings had been substantially altered and expressed doubt they were of architectural merit, and doubted that they all deserved to be listed (Marquet 1998).

The Historic Places Trust were in the process of investigating the nominations for Historic Area Status under the then new Historic Places Act 1993 when they gave evidence to the Guthrie Hearing on Plan Change 3. Pam Wilson for Historic Places Trust argued that the baches did meet the criteria of Section 23 of the Historic Places Act 1993 for identifying historic places and indeed qualified in several ways including; reflecting important or representative aspects in New Zealand history, community associations or public esteem for the place, potential of the place for

education and the extent to which the place forms part of a wider historical and cultural landscape. Interestingly she suggested under the history section that ‘The long debate over the baches location has added a further historical dimension to them’(Wilson 1993:4). Her evidence concluded that while the Trust generally supported Plan Change 3 they opposed the provision of a bach zone behind ‘The Row’ stating that ‘Further baches built behind ‘The Row’ would diminish the historic values of the existing group and undermine their visual integrity’ (ibid:5)

The Department of Conservation’s heritage witness supported the Trust’s assessment that the baches have heritage value but Department of Conservation’s planning witness suggested ‘the impact of the baches on public access, scenic landscape and amenity values was such that only a few of them, if any should be permitted to remain for their acknowledged heritage value’ (quoted in Guthrie1993:21-22)

The evidence of other heritage witnesses acknowledged that two or perhaps three baches were historic, but that the others were so altered by additions and modern amenities that they could no longer be considered examples of 1920s baches. (Evison 1993, Gray 1993)

Commissioner Guthrie considered

*The essential issue raised by plan change 3 is whether the history of bach development in the Taylors Mistake Area; and the heritage value those baches and bach sites have are sufficient to allow them to remain when balanced against the competing community interest in providing for access to and recreation along, and enhancement of amenity values of the area affected by the Plan Change. (Guthrie 1993:18)*

Commissioner Guthrie felt that heritage evidence was equivocal but his findings are such a clear summation of a particular way of looking at heritage that I would like to quote them at length

*My own inspection of the area led me to agree with the conclusions reached by Mr H E Evison, an historian who gave evidence on the historical significance of the baches ...and noted*

*All of the 19<sup>th</sup> century baches have long since gone. Most of the baches originated in 1920s and 30s, but the great majority of them have been so modernised and extended that their overall appearance is now representative of the 1960s.*

*Only six of the baches can now pass for pre-second World War seaside baches. The rest having been built during the last thirty or forty years, or have been so modernised or modified as to have in Mr Evison's view, no historical significance. The provision of modern amenities to the baches such as electricity, water, sewerage disposal (essential for the preservation of the health of the community and of the marine environment) detracts from the historical characteristic of the baches before the Second World War being of compactness, cheapness and simplicity.*

*I found Mr Evison's evidence compelling and I accept his conclusions.*

*9.12 A common feature of all the evidence concerning historical or heritage was that two baches in Boulder Bay number 1 (subject to the removal of a recent addition) and number 2, were of both historic and heritage significance. In Taylors Mistake some witnesses mentioned bach number 34 as being of merit for these values.*

*9.13 Retention of these three baches will provide an opportunity to visitors to Taylors Mistake to:*

- 1 See a style of holiday accommodation that is representative of an earlier time in New Zealand history.*
- 2 Observe the nature of the buildings, and to understand aspects of the history of earlier attempts by urban communities to enjoy an outdoor lifestyle.*
- 3 Reflect on and discuss social history, something which the Historic Places Trust saw as important educationally. (Guthrie 1993:22-23)*

Commissioner Guthrie's recommendations did not support 'the Mediated Solution' and if they were accepted

*1.13 Will result in Christchurch Council resolving the issue of the future of the baches in other ways.*

*1.14 Ultimately it is likely to require the removal of all but three truly historic baches from the area. (ibid:1)*

He also felt that HPT opposing the bach zone behind the Row 'calls into question the very quid pro quo which is at the heart of the mediated solution' (ibid:13).

The bach owners referred this decision to the Planning Tribunal, but before it could be heard, Christchurch City Council started hearings on its 1995 Proposed City Plan and appointed Commissioner Marquet to hear the proposal again. Many of the same positions were rehearsed, but there were some new perspectives added. The baches on 'The Row' had been registered as an Historic Area in October 1995 by the Historic Places Trust, and the Department of Conservation took no part in the hearing.

The Planning Officers report which included evidence from a council landscape architect, an historian, a council heritage planner and an Historic Places Trust representative was quite divided, with the heritage planner arguing that the Taylors Mistake baches do not have significant heritage. The other three experts argued that they did, but proposed various solutions.

The Council heritage planner argued that he did not regard the Historic Places Trust listings as 'completely acceptable or legally defensible under the RMA and a new comprehensive heritage assessment program was tested and instituted for the City Plan. [and] the conclusion was none of the baches met the heritage standards individually or as heritage places to justify inclusion in the proposed City Plan' (N Carrie 1998:2). He argued that the identification of criteria covering a range of values need to be rigorously defined to avoid 'double counting' which was an 'evident weakness in most criteria sets where there was no distinction between or definition of criteria such that overlap and duplication was evident, S23 of the HPA 1993 is an obvious example' (ibid:4)

This process was intended to achieve legal defensibility, transparency 'and to the maximum professional extent possible, in an albeit inherently subjective process, a



rigorous assessment of heritage value' (ibid.). In his conclusion Carrie felt that many of the baches:

*do not represent particularly distinctive examples of the do-it-yourself seaside building. Many have been continuously updated to conform to a conventional standard and appearance of housing. Most do not make any definite acknowledgement of their setting. There is a lack of innovation and artifice in most cases in terms of construction and materials. This clearly could not have been said to the original cave dwellings, or to some extent to the converted railway carriages to 'Stone End' or 'Rosy Morn' (c1912) or to N.10 in Boulder Bay, the latter showing a distinct architectural design sensibility in my opinion.*

*There have however, traditionally been areas of North Beach and North New Brighton, that offer comparable standards of age, construction, materials and the do-it-yourself Kiwi attitude. There are other coastal settlements in Canterbury which have similar building examples.*

*Whatever community values are associated with the Taylors Mistake, Hobsons Bay and Boulder Bay baches in these particular landscape settings on the Peninsula, I do not accept that the baches have the heritage status and therefore the requirement for protection that would justify a heritage listing in the Christchurch City Plan. (ibid: 8-9)*

This appears to outline a version of heritage that Warren-Findley (2001) suggests is informed by a 'fine arts perspective', which I will discuss further in the next chapter. The Council landscape architect took a quite different approach arguing that they were an important part of the landscape character because

*the very nature of the baches, the fact that they are stylistically vernacular, are small, humble, rumpy-do and precariously located in an environment that threatens them with extinction at any moment probably says more about the character of their setting than if they were not there at all. In this sense the baches tell a story about the dynamic animation and sublimity of their environment that probably could not be better told. Again, if we are talking about preserving the natural character of this*

*coastal environment then these baches, in my opinion, go a long way toward defining it (Craig 1998 :10) (see fig 18)*

Noting that those opposed to the baches argue they are unsightly, he agrees in a



Fig 18 Boulder Bay in A Craig 1998

suburban setting they might be, but this is not necessarily true in a coastal setting and says

*It is true that they are not architectural masterpieces, and if we were to determine whether a building should stay or go on appearance alone then we might entertain the demolition of much of Christchurch...In visual assessment we not only look at appearance but perhaps more importantly what appearance means. Buildings and the landscape of which they are constituent denote particular meanings. In other words appearance can never be divorced from meaning.*

*For many, but clearly not all, I would speculate that these baches would denote the qualities of simplicity, humility, ingenuity, resourcefulness, community coherence and egalitarianism. In fact these are all qualities that we might like to mythically ascribe to the 'good old days' and hence the nostalgic appeal of the baches (ibid:13-14)*

Craig also opposed the relocation of baches to a private bach zone because he doubted 'the bachyness of the baches could ever be replicated unless exactly the same conditions are in existence that gave rise to them in first place' (ibid:16). Instead he proposed the wider public be surveyed every ten years, asking whether they perceived adverse effects from the baches. He argued that uncertainty is an

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Fig 19 The Hermitage demolished in 1979

important ingredient contributing to the character of the baches.

*Remove the uncertainty and the result will be a substantial increase in investment into the upkeep and improvement of the baches. This will inevitably change their character to a point where they will edge toward the resemblance of suburban homes, in which case they may as well become part of any living zone (ibid: 15)*

Architect Ian Athfield started his submission by presenting an Edison phonograph cylinder that he and Wade Doak had pilfered from 'The Hermitage' (see fig 19) cave bach in 1953. He wanted it to be part of the Taylors Mistake Museum if it was ever to be set up. He noted that Taylors Mistake was similar to Makara and Rangitoto Island. In between his first visit to Rangitoto in 1959 when most of the baches still existed and his return in the mid 1980s, he argued that 'although a limited number of buildings remain, the soul has gone' (Athfield 1998 unpaginated). At Makara, he

noted that baches were removed from the foreshore in the 1970s and a new foreshore was created.

*I could not believe the difference in abuse to the environment. The extent of broken glass and rubbish compared with the previous relationship between boats, dinghies, cottages and water. Subconsciously these images have altered my attitudes to buildings and landscape. I see the two conditions of buildings and landscape as inseparable where the occupier becomes the custodian of the open space rather than the possessor of it. Title as a prerequisite of building detaches the occupier from both his or her neighbour and the land. It is settlements such as Taylors Mistake, which we should build our future around rather than condemn (ibid)*

Evidence from historian Gordon Ogilvie in support of the Historic Places Trust was also in favour of retaining the baches. He argued that many of the modifications were themselves historic and that the baches are an important part of Christchurch's social and recreational history, built by skilled artisans. He also suggested that in other countries, like Canada, Tasmania, Ireland, Scotland such basic recreational settlements 'are treated as a valid part of the landscape and considered historically important' (Ogilvie 1998:3)

In his concluding remarks, Ogilvie outlined his thoughts about history in relation to the baches.

*History is more than dates, statutes, by-laws and stern textual analysis. It is about people; about their hopes fears, ambitions. It is about people at play as well as at war and at work. The Taylors Mistake issue is far from cut –and –dried, and even historians will differ as to what should be done. but we should never forget in our deliberations that people are involved as well as buildings and a rocky landscape; people (notably the bach owners) who have treasured their holiday cribs for up to four generations, who treat them virtually as family heirlooms (ibid:4 emphasis in original).*

In his final statement, he quotes a visitor who he met on the track at Taylors Mistake

*Waving rather dismissively towards the western skyline he remarked, 'These baches have more right to be here, and fit the landscape better, than any of those million dollar monstrosities on the hill'. Without wishing to offend too many of my good friends on Scarborough, I tend to agree (ibid).*

The most interesting thing about the main Historic Places Trust submission is that it only talks about the heritage values of baches as they currently exist and makes no mention of the impact the 'Mediated Solution' might have on heritage values, when baches are demolished and relocated to behind 'The Row' (See Fig 20). The

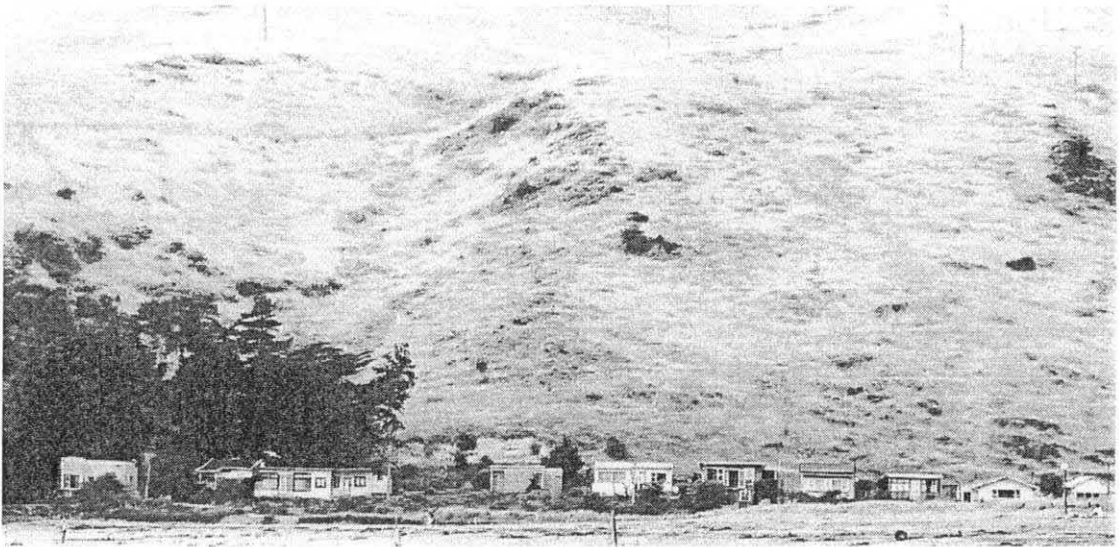


Fig 20 "The Row" showing Bach 34 (green bach in the middle)

Commissioner also made note of this in his Recommendations (Marquet 1998:56)

In a long and thorough Recommendation, Commissioner Marquet supported the 'Mediated Solution' and argued that majority of heritage experts 'saw heritage value with respect to the baches and their siting' (Marquet 1998:61). He doubted, however, the efficacy of what he described as Mr Craig's policy of 'attrition', arguing that strict control provisions could maintain character.

He also disagreed with Evison's assertion that

*baches mentioned as being representative of earlier bach types should be removed from the unformed legal road along with the rest. If possible they should then be re-erected elsewhere, provided their original character is preserved (H Evison quoted in ibid: 22-23)*

*Dr Evison did not see the fact of shifting the baches as being a disabling factor stating that 'they may be re-erected to retain authenticity. They should not be peopled but be under the control of the local authority' (ibid)*

The Christchurch City Council adopted Commissioner Marquet's recommendations and this time the groups opposing the retention of the baches (Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and Save the Bay Limited) made a reference to the Environment Court which was heard in 2001 before Judge Smith. The issues were revisited in even greater detail in a case that lasted 4 weeks (Marquet's hearing was only 5 days). There was even stronger evidence in support of the heritage values of the baches, because the Council heritage planner now also argued that 'while the City Plan heritage criteria have been used here for guidance in the assessment process, the baches do not fit the heritage model necessary for inclusion in the heritage listing'(Carrie 2002:14), but failure to include the baches

*didn't mean these have no heritage value at all. However, in my opinion, the heritage values of the baches derive predominantly from the context of their physical groupings and settings, the nature of their construction and the recreational community that they have served over time.*

He continued

*Recognition and protection of the heritage values of the baches is dependant on their continued direct relationship with the edge of the sea and the landscape setting. Any significant relocations, removals or new additions to the numbers of baches in a group will in my opinion, rob the existing buildings of some of their most essential historic or cultural qualities. I accept, however that the decision of the Council, which would result in the loss of up to 15 baches, represents a wider judgement than just that of heritage issues I have raised. (Carrie 2002:18)*

Although heritage issues were canvassed very thoroughly in the Environment Court, the issue of the 15 baches to be removed under the 'Mediated Solution' were not

addressed. This was because no individual or group such as Historic Places Trust made a cross reference in support of retaining all the baches.

Despite not hearing evidence about the baches on the headland at the north end of the main beach known as The Point, and whether there is any access past them, the Court in its decision declared

*We accept that currently access to Hobsons Bay is significantly restricted by the baches on the headland, ...the access across the headland is critical if the plan is to enhance access of members of the public to Hobsons Bay. We suspect that many visitors would be attracted to Hobsons Bay if the baches were not currently on the headland. Without baches on the headland visitors could access Hobsons Bay from the Main Beach even at high tide (Decision in STBL vs Christchurch City Council:40-41).*

You can, however, access Hobsons Bay at high tide, because there is already a public footpath that goes from the beach to Hobsons Bay. It passes under the verandah of a bach no56 and provides a unique position to look into a 1950s bach kitchen at very close quarters. The public footpath sign, however, is only roughly painted on the rocks by the beach, which may explain why the Court considered that 'Although it may theoretically be possible to access across the headland at high tide, the Court was unable to find any public path readily visible' (ibid: 34). The Court also felt that once the baches were removed, suitable fishing and picnicking sites would be created (ibid).

The Environment Court was effectively deciding on a solution that had been arrived at 10 years earlier, where certain features had become locked in, such as removal of the baches, but ideas about heritage have changed quite dramatically in those 10 years. This raises several issues about heritage and environmental decision-making, which I will discuss in the next chapter. Another model of decision making has been undertaken on Rangitoto Island, by the Department of Conservation, who are governed primarily by the Conservation Act 1987 and the Reserves Act 1977.

#### 7.4 Rangitoto Island: Approaches to Heritage

In 1991 the Regional Conservator, John Ombler, set in place a moratorium on bach demolition, which had been sought by NZHPT since the early 1980s, (Farrant 1999), to allow time for assessment of architectural and historical values.

The Treadwell report assessing the baches concluded that

*the Rangitoto baches have a distinct architectural identity and can be distinguished from the collective diversity of New Zealand cribs and baches. Owing to official constraints on buildings and alterations, they have retained much of their formal character. (Treadwell 1994 section 2.11.1 in Ombler 1996:5)*

Treadwell also concluded the bach community was significant piece of local history and that the surviving baches are artefacts of that history, and their significance would best be 'preserved by the retention of all the baches and artefacts related to the community' (Ombler 1996:5).

Ombler (1996) in his memo to the Deputy Director of DoC requesting confirmation or alteration of current policy compared the significance of other bach settlements and suggested

*other well-known examples are under immediate threat. The surviving Taylors Mistake baches on the Banks Peninsula will probably soon be removed by the Council (except for three examples) following a legal ruling. The baches at Shag Point, Dunedin, are likely to fall victim to development, as land around them is subdivided and property values increase. Development and rising property values will in time see the end of almost all privately owned 'traditional' baches (ibid.).*

He also discusses other bach settlements with more certain futures and concludes Hatepe dates from after WWII, Bayleys Beach were professionally built and other enclaves have their origins as workers huts whereas, Rangitoto's baches were built specifically for holiday purposes and lack mains power. They have also not been swallowed by modernisation or lost some of the number to modernisation. 'The fact



that they are on public land provides an opportunity to ensure their protection which would not be possible in the case of private land' (ibid: 6)

Ombler also makes the point that the National Coastal Policy Statement (Policy 1.1.3) declares it a national priority to protect features and elements of the character of the coastal environment including 'significant places or areas of historic or cultural significance'. General Principle 8 also states that 'cultural, spiritual, amenity and intrinsic values are the heritage of future generations and damages to those values is often irreversible' (ibid.).

Ombler then canvasses the difficulties of continued private usage of a scenic reserve, which only allows for leases if they serve as facilities for public recreation or for trade or business that enable the public to enjoy the reserve. He notes domestic residential purposes are allowed if the classification was changed to Historic Reserve, but this is not provided for in the Conservation Management Strategy as the 'primarily and internationally recognised values of the Island are natural (it forms an entire ecological district)' (ibid: 8). He notes that there are some ecological impacts of the baches including; invasive weeds brought over prior to WWII by bachholders; the risk of fire from outdoor cooking areas, introduction of pests although these are yet to be eradicated, and the problem of long drop toilets into permeable and non permeable rock (ibid: 9-10).

Before suggesting possible policy options for the baches Ombler notes that there may be policy implications for other DoC administered land with bach settlements for example Tongaporutu in Taranaki. 'In all cases considerable public feeling is likely to be involved, both from the bachholders and their supporters and those who strongly oppose exclusive use of public land by private individuals' (ibid: 10).

Ombler then lists the options available to the conservancy and sets out the advantages and disadvantages of each option. The options identified were:

*1. To retain all baches as Inhabited Baches*

*1a. To retain some of the Baches as Inhabited Baches*

*'those identified as having particular architectural or historical significance in the Treadwell report'*

2. *To Convert the Baches to Public Use*

3. *To Retain one or more baches as House Museums* (ibid10-12)

The advantage of retaining inhabited baches were seen as providing conservation of perhaps the last group of 'architecturally significant' structures of its type in the country 'theoretically' at no cost to the department, and conditions could be written into agreements protecting baches from inappropriate alterations. 'They could remain frozen in time to a large extent (subject to legal constraints)'. The disadvantages were that; it would be unfair to the families of dead bach owners whose baches had been demolished against their will, would contravene the principle that public land should be held for the public, though less so if they were made honorary rangers, might conflict with long term goals of weed and pest eradication and the use of honorary rangers might be seen as a cynical means of circumventing policy and legislation (ibid: 10).

The advantages and disadvantages of retaining some baches was similar to option 1 but less desirable from a historic conservation point of view and unfair to those current bach owners whose baches were not assessed as being of 'particular significance' (ibid: 11).

Renting the baches to the public, certain groups or organisations as temporary accommodation on a booking basis was also seen to conserve the structures, and the revenue could offset the cost of maintaining the baches. There was, however, quite a list of disadvantages including unfairness to bach holding families 'if the department was then to appear to profit by letting the baches out to the public'. The families might exercise legal right to demolish and the costs of complying with health Act and the Building Act for a large group of baches may be considerable (ibid: 12).

The Bach Museum concept could conserve up to five baches preferably in a precinct. Other baches would be removed or demolished 'but not until they had been fully recorded'. Interpretation of the baches '(perhaps with a permanent photographic exhibition in the Community hall) would help to preserve knowledge of the bach settlements on Rangitoto'. The three advantages of this proposal were seen as;

- a. Conservation of one or more examples of a historically and architecturally significant group of structures.

- b. There would be no ecological impacts as the baches would not be occupied.
- c. Costs of remedial and maintenance work would be much lower than costs of upgrading for public accommodation (ibid: 12).

The disadvantages were that there would still be 'significant fiscal implications of maintaining even a few baches (NB there are also significant costs involved in demolition and removal from the island)'. The other disadvantage was that the 'Department would be conserving static museum pieces, rather than the living/functional buildings the baches were intended to be' (ibid). Ombler concluded that his report provided a summary of the complex issues associated with the Rangitoto baches, which were considered important in both a national and regional context, but there were fiscal and political implications to be considered and some of the options would require reversal or amendment of Ministerial policy established in 1956. He continued,

*Taking all factors into account the Conservancy's preference is for option 3, limiting the number of baches to a maximum of 5...(discussion of numbers, costs and benefits outlined earlier). Option 3 is the only one which does not create a potentially dangerous precedent for the Department in other situations, and which eliminates almost all the negative ecological impacts. (ibid: 13).*

The decision was supported by the Minister of Conservation Nick Smith, and with the end of the moratorium in 1996, there ensued a public campaign to get the decision reversed. Heritage planners with Auckland City Council (Farrant 1999) and NZHPT (Patchett 1997), the chairman of the Auckland regional council (See Linzey 1998 item 74) argued against the policy and were 'working to try and find a solution that allows the baches to be protected and preserved, without compromising the very high conservation values of Rangitoto Island' (Patchett 1997). Noted conservation architects Jeremy Salmond, Jeremy Treadwell (Ombler 1996) and Nigel Cook argued that they should be retained as functional baches, 'Rangitoto is far more wonderful with the baches retained and still in use than it is without them' (Cook 1996:27). Nigel Cook ended his article in 'The Listener' which previewed the bach

documentary, 'A Summer Place' (TV1 October 20 8.35 p.m. 1996) with the comment that

*A tree can always grow again, but these particular buildings, once destroyed are gone forever* (Cook 1996:27)

The proposal that came forward involved developing a Trust to take over the administration of some of the baches. DoC continued to resist this proposal until after the 1999 election when the policy was 'changed at ministerial level' (S MacCready pers.comm.). This allowed the Rangitoto Island Historic Conservation Trust to begin assessing baches and working with DoC to retain and maintain the baches in the interest of the general public rather than specifically for the current lessees. The Department of Conservation were willing to allow a management arrangement with the families to exist for three years but they wanted to 'get it firmly across that the baches are no longer private' (S McCready pers.comm.).

Concurrently with these events the Auckland City Council carried out heritage assessments using their numerical system (see appendix 2). If an item reaches 75 points it is considered worthy of Category I protection under the Historic Places Act 1993, while over 50 is considered worthy of Category II protection (G Farrant pers.comm.). Thirty of the thirty-four remaining baches received over 50 points with the highest scoring 71 points. As with all attempts at quantitative assessment of subjective values there are potential problems with both the objectivity of the relative assessments and the fundamental biases of the assessment criteria, I will discuss these difficulties further in the next chapter.

This chapter has outlined the key legislation affecting heritage and the main organisations that administer that legislation, and presented the 'edited highlights' of two management approaches towards bach settlements, which have been recognised for their heritage values by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Both settlements are on public land, but one is on an unformed legal road administered by a Territorial Local Authority, primarily under the Resource Management Act 1991, while the other is on a Scenic Reserve administered by the Department of Conservation, primarily under the Reserves Act 1977 and the Conservation Act 1987. In the next chapter, I will discuss the intellectual perspectives underlying these policies.

## **Chapter 8 Discussion and Conclusions**

### **8.1 Key Bach Heritage Issues.**

The primary distinction concerning bach settlement heritage is whether they are situated on public or private land. This split has major implications for an authority's ability to protect and conserve baches. On private land the increasing value of coastal property means that traditional baches occupy land worth a small fortune and owners will either sell to developers or renovate their baches (Ansley 2002c). Even owners that do treasure and preserve their baches find the landscape is changing incrementally or dramatically around them. The question of protecting baches on private land is beyond the scope of this thesis so I will concentrate on issues related to bach settlements on public land where authorities have some control over what happens. This control cannot be exerted in a vacuum however as there are strong feelings both from bach holders and those who support some kind of retention of bach heritage and those who are opposed to any kind of exclusive private occupation of private land, and consequent reduction in public access. There are also implications of particular approaches, for the treatment of other settlements, particularly on Department of Conservation land. These issues are discussed in the first section of this chapter.

The next section discusses issues related to assessing bach heritage. Both Christchurch City Council and Auckland City Council have done 'rigorous' assessments of the baches at Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island respectively, but they appear to be informed by a particular intellectual perspective, which creates systematic bias. These biases are reflected in discussions of issues such as modifications and authenticity, landscape setting and the possibility of relocation, the integrity of the group and issues related to distinctive or representative heritage and the contribution of social history.

The difficulties of assessing heritage are considerable but they tend to pale into significance when compared with the ongoing difficulties of managing bach heritage. Do you conclude that public use of public land is paramount and demolish all the baches or perhaps retain a few of the best examples as bach museums? Another solution might be to recognise the importance of family history and social history,

and allow some or all of the baches to remain inhabited, and/or possibly relocate them on to private land. This is, however, extremely unpopular with environmental and public access groups and those who resent the bach holder claiming they are egalitarian structures while making an income from them, although one referrer would have been happy if all the baches at Taylors Mistake were relocated to private land (Snoep 2002). In this option you might also decide, as one witness suggested that it is uncertainty that retains character, and continue to make their existence tenuous.

Yet another option is to explore some form of public or trust ownership as is happening on Rangitoto Island. This potentially 'saves' the buildings, but there are all sorts of problems maintaining a large collection of baches, and how do you decide who gets to use the baches. These issues are important but they tend to be subsumed by arguments about buildings on public land.

## **8.2 Baches on Public Land**

Not all bach settlements on public land are especially contentious. There are still settlements tucked into out of the way places that have continued to exist largely below the radar of local authorities and environmental groups. They are however disapproved of in principle by environmental groups and sometimes a particular person within a local authority may galvanise attempts to resolve the issue by removing the baches. The more usual story in local authority management on bach settlements on public lands has been to turn a 'blind eye' or put it in the 'too hard basket' or sign some sort of long term lease, which defers the hard decisions. The particular circumstances vary widely in different locations but the general arguments are often similar. Bach owners argue that they have had long family attachments to their bach and often claim to have achieved partial legitimacy through the local authority charging rents and/or rates. They also point to local authority decisions providing water and electricity, which suggest acceptance, as happened at Boulder Bay when the Municipal Electricity Department supplied power free of charge in 1968 (Marquet 1998). More recently, bach holders, in some locations, have also argued that the baches have cultural heritage value for the wider community.

These arguments are hotly disputed by those opposed to the baches, who argue that public land should be sacrosanct and the only advantages accrue to the bachholders. This depth of feeling is illustrated by John Freeman's contention at the 1998 Taylors Mistake hearing that

*It is my firm belief that private occupation of public land is a crime. Land is the most precious and valuable resource on Earth and as the population increases it becomes more precious to hold on to the Public Share (in Marquet 1998:25)*

At the same hearing the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (RFBPS) representative David Alexander, highlighted a feeling that is probably more widely held. RFBPS have the longest history of consistent opposition to baches on public land which Alexander showed went back to at least early 1970s, (an article by Fowlds in the 1951 Forest and Bird magazine about Rangitoto Island also expresses concern about private land and reinforces Alexander's point). Alexander suggests that the proponents of the baches concentrate their arguments around two themes; 'their historic and cultural value to the whole of Christchurch [and] that their presence does no harm' (Alexander 1998:7), he continued

*I consider the historical and cultural value of the baches is severely limited – self interest appears to be a motivating factor for those making these arguments...I consider that any cultural value to the city as a whole is virtually non existent. The major cultural value is to the owners and occupiers of the baches who get a personal gain from using them. In doing so, they deprive many others from getting an enjoyable cultural experience from the use of prime picnic spots, or from enjoying bays with a more natural character.*

These assertions raise a host of issues. I certainly agree that many people resent the personal gain that accrues to owning a bach and I am inclined to agree that it is unfair. Even some people who like the baches and feel that they are part of the character of the place, feel uneasy about the personal gains of the bachholders,

particularly because some are rented out for several hundred dollars a week (Hood pers comm).

By no means all the baches are rented at Taylors Mistake and probably very few are in more remote settlements, but I can see how it sticks in the craw that bachholders, (some of whom are accountants, lawyers and architects at Taylors Mistake) claim the bach represents egalitarian heritage, while at the same time deriving rental income from them and/or enjoying a privileged spot on the beach and a place in the sun. It is 'The Row's location in the sunniest side of the Bay that makes it a potentially desirable place to picnic.

I would argue that the 'enjoyable cultural experience' of picnicking is not a good justification for the removal of the baches, however as up to five thousand people use the beach during the summer holidays and the vast majority picnic on the sandy beach (pers obs). Evidence at all the hearings relating to recreation at Taylors Mistake has been anecdotal, witnesses have talked about the problems of getting sand in one's chicken sandwich and the perceived 'front yard effect' of the baches. Again, I would argue that these issues cannot be inferred from overseas research or based on the opinions of 'expert' witnesses, who have not done any research. The research required to understand the public's feelings about the baches is not straightforward either. There are issues of who should be included in the sample; those who go to Taylors Mistake, the residents of Christchurch, or perhaps it is a nationally important issue, which I think it is. But what about people who have never heard of or been to the place, and how much information do you give respondents.

Obviously, people go to Taylors Mistake with a whole range of ideas, values and beliefs, and these imaginative constructions of the place and of baches, may be confirmed or confounded by their actual experience. The smell of sewerage or sullage leaking down the rocks may be overpowering, or cutdown shrubs and trees may have been thrown out of the fenced enclosure surrounding a bach into the nominally even more public land, or they may be made to feel unwelcome by a bach holder or simply the presence of the baches. On the other hand, they may enjoy the contrast between the humble baches, and their million dollar neighbours on the Scarborough Hill as (Olgivie 1998) noted of the person he ran into. They might also



get into a fascinating discussion with one of the bachholders about the history of the place, or they might enjoy the intimacy of having to walk under the small verandah of the bach no 56 on The Point to get around to Hobson's Bay at high tide.

These unpredictable experiences can have considerable consequences, which is illustrated by the Environment Court's observations that there is no high tide access to Hobson's Bay. Their collective failure to find the access path led to conclusions that the baches impeded access and would provide potential places for fishing and picnicking despite hearing no evidence about these particular baches because they were not in dispute. This is not a situation to be lamented but is entirely to be expected, and it highlights the complexity of people's interactions with the landscape, and the dynamic fluidity of places, which are hybrid constructions of culture and nature (Ingold 2000).

Alexander also mentions the idea of a penguin parade at Boulder Bay, which I have not addressed because both Commissioner Marquet and the Environment Court argued that it was beyond the scope of their references and is rather a different issue to the retention or demolition of baches at the main Taylors Mistake Beach. What is interesting about Boulder Bay in relation to public land is that the White Flipped Penguin Trust acknowledges that the two stone baches, 'Stone End' and 'Rosy Morn' are heritage baches and should be preserved. Several members of the Trust, however, have suggested (in interviews and private conversations) that the baches management should be taken over by the Trust and they might provide accommodation or

*[They] can be part of the whole penguin thing where maybe they could be turned into exhibits, I mean photographic exhibits of the penguins, something to do with the Penguin Trust or you could have one as a lecture room or you could have an interactive display room house. You know, I mean they can become part of the whole thing, so I don't think you can divorce them. (Interview with White Flipped Penguin Trust member)*

These suggestions appear to blur the line between public and private ownership of baches when a trust for penguin conservation and tourism suggests that their usage is

in the public interest. It highlights what Ombler (1996) considered was the unfairness of DoC taking over the baches, 'if the Department were then to appear to profit by letting the baches out to the public'. In this scenario, visitors would presumably pay to see the Penguin Parade and the baches would be part of the experience. Ideas of public interest vary depending on where you stand. You might consider that your usage of a building is in the public interest, whether it is conserving a part of New Zealand's bach heritage or conserving a penguin, but others might not see it that way.

There are potentially implications for bach settlements in other parts of the country, if the baches at Rangitoto Island and Taylors Mistake were to be preserved. Other settlements like Tongaporutu might be able to put up convincing cases that are lent support by what has happened elsewhere and say they should get the same treatment, but the cases are usually taken on their merits so precedents do not guarantee anything. What is sometimes suggested, is that if baches are allowed to stay on public land we should all be allowed to build. As Anderson (2002) in a letter to *The Listener* after the January bach issue suggests in relation to the Queens Chain and those who have built on it

*One great peril overshadows all this freedom. Over the 163 years since its inception, the chain width has been built on surreptitiously by those who thought they could get away with doing so... the only, but surely inconceivable, alternative to their removal is to allow all of us to build there, which would indeed reduce our coastal environment to places where one pays to get to the seaside. Allowing illegally built baches to remain for the lifetime of those presently owning them is a most generous act. If any object to this leniency, then they should all be made to go now, removing all traces of their illegal presence as they go.*  
(2002:6).

There can be no doubting the passion of these sentiments but as Commissioner Marquet (1998) pointed out the fact that the baches exist and might be provided for in a particular situation does not confer any rights to other baches or allow new buildings. These discussions clearly highlight the difficulty of dealing with what Matless describes as 'an enormous and complex philosophical and political

minefield, concerning rights to land, definitions of pleasure and beauty, claims to authority over the content and form of public and private space' (1998:12). Matless also suggests while there are economic considerations involved, morality and aesthetics are inextricably entwined in these arguments. This certainly seems to be the case as much with baches in New Zealand as it is with Plotlands in England.

For some people a sense of moral outrage appears to underpin their feelings about the bach on public land regardless of circumstances and they will not be happy with anything short of complete demolition with every trace of occupation expunged. This does not appear, however, to be the way public sentiment is moving. There is an increasing acknowledgement that baches, and indeed bach settlements on public lands, are an important part of New Zealand's social history. This view is not the only one among heritage experts of course, and to highlight these, we now turn to heritage assessments of baches.

### **8.3 Assessing Bach Heritage**

Heritage assessment can be quite contentious and it certainly appears that baches are more contentious than most buildings to assess, as there seem to be frequent disagreements over how to do it. The Christchurch City Council Heritage Planner, Neil Carrie argued that the New Zealand Historic Places assessments were not 'acceptable or legally defensible under the RMA' and that the CCC had developed their 'own rigorous assessment of heritage value that had legal defensibility and transparency (Carrie 1998) These different assessment methods, however seem to rely on different intellectual perspectives (Warren-Findley 2001). NZHPT assessments appear more influenced by a humanities perspective while the CCC and Auckland City Council assessments are grounded in a fine arts perspective.

The Auckland City Council heritage evaluation sheet (see Appendix 2) highlights some of the dilemmas of assessing heritage objectively. As soon as you decide to give particular values to certain categories, you are making subjective choices. In this example, the building itself makes up potentially 40% of the assessment and nearly 30% is potentially allocated to famous people or events whereas just over 12% is allocated to social history. The evaluation sheets usefulness in determining landscape heritage is even more limited as only 10% of the total possible marks are allocated to

the environment section. The physical setting can only receive a maximum of 3 marks or less than 1% and yet most of the baches receive 1 mark and the comment “little altered coastal location”. This strikes me as bizarre given the number of commentators who remark on the uniqueness of the setting of the Rangitoto baches yet under site integrity every bach gets the maximum possible 10 marks because it is ‘on original site’. The evaluation form also automatically sees any changes to the bach as reducing its value.

There are other quirks with it that may be inherent or related to the particular assessor. For instance, the four baches built by Watson Brothers are given 2 marks in the Architect/Designer/Originator Section, while none of the other baches score any marks in that section. In terms of what the bach is, it would seem more appropriate to deduct marks from those that were not self-built rather than adding marks. It is also interesting to note that three of the four highest scores were all for baches built by the Watson Brothers<sup>1</sup>, with comments in the design section like ‘Remarkable 1930s detailing for a bach’ and ‘Bungalow-pure style inside and out’. These examples are only minor compared to the inherent bias of the whole evaluation sheet but they also appear to illustrate the tyranny of the fine arts approach. Carrie’s comment that the baches do not fit the CCC heritage model also appears to support this contention.

Both the fine arts perspective and the humanities perspective are reflected in aspects of bach heritage assessments such as the debates over; whether the baches are distinctive or representative heritage, issues of group integrity, modification and the importance of setting and relocation.

### **8.3.1 Distinctive or Representative**

Whether baches and bach settlements are distinctive or representative heritage is a matter of scale. An individual bach may or may not be representative of baches as a whole, but given the diversity of bach styles and materials there is a limit to how representative any one bach might be. It can only tell a very general story about an era that was marked by diversity. On the other hand, bach settlements like the one at Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island are extremely distinctive historic places and if

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<sup>1</sup> Assessments in authors possession

they are kept intact (the intactness of Rangitoto Island has already dramatically decreased though) can tell a far richer story.

It was clear from Neil Carrie's evidence at the 1998 Marquet hearing that he was only interested in individual buildings rather than the settlement as a whole. He felt they 'do not represent particularly distinctive examples of the do-it-yourself seaside building' that areas of North Beach offer 'comparable' examples and 'other coastal settlements in Canterbury which has similar building examples'. This concentration on the building itself is indicative of the fine arts perspective. A humanities perspective is a far more likely to take into account the whole settlement, reflecting on the social history of the whole community of the settlement rather than just famous individuals or particular buildings. As Pam Wilson noted at the 1993 Guthrie Hearing the 'long debate over the baches location has added a further historical dimension to them'. There have been several more layers added to that debate since 1993 and Taylors Mistake has become as much part of a New Zealand's conservation and environmental history as the Clyde Dam or saving the Civic Theatre. It highlights the way ideas change (and sometimes do not) from the demolition of the cave baches because they did not have main power to 'The Row's' registration as an historic area. But it is far easier to interpret that story with the baches there than if there are only foundations and reinforcing left.

The distinctiveness of the settlements on Rangitoto Island is discussed in terms of their 'frozen in time' (Ombler 1996) quality, because they do not have mains power and none have been built since 1937. This is the preferred model of the fine arts perspective, which tends to equate buildings with paintings and fails to see the creative involvement of the user or occupier (McLean 2002). There is a far richer story to tell which includes not only the baches and their inhabitant's interactions with the place and each other but also the intransigence of Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park Board and their determination to erase all traces of habitation with dynamite. That irony was surely lost on them.

### **8.3.2 Group Integrity**

The fine arts and humanities perspectives have fundamentally different ideas about the importance of group integrity. The fine arts perspective prioritises individual

buildings selecting only the 'genuine' best as worthy of preservation. The humanities perspective on the other hand sees the integrity of the whole as more than the sum of its parts. Losses in the group are likened to a jaw with half of the teeth knocked out.

As Ian Athfield noted when you remove some of the baches the soul of the place dies and it can also have unexpected consequences. Without the custodial influence of the baches the way place is used may change, vandalism may increase and may not become such a wonderful picnic spot after all. It is impossible to predict exactly what might happen at Taylors Mistake if some or all the baches were removed, but it would certainly change the feel of the place.

### **8.3.3 Modification and Authenticity**

The issue of modifications has been consistently the most contentious issue at the Taylors Mistake Hearings. Those opposed to the baches argue that it is only the unmodified ones that have any heritage value. Commissioner Guthrie supported this view in the 1993 hearing saying he found it 'compelling' and recommended that only three baches including bach No 1 (subject to the removal of a recent addition) were preserved. Again, the similarities with how an artwork or historical document might be treated are strong but they are completely contrary to the guidelines of the ICOMOS Charter (1993). The charter says 'the evidence of time and the contributions of all periods should be respected in conservation'. This is particularly appropriate guidance for baches, which were not built to be monuments, instead they were often 'works in progress'. Their ongoing nature is an intrinsic part of what the bach is and it makes no sense to treat them as lifeless objects.

It is interesting to note that bach No 1 at Boulder Bay known as Stone End had had at least five different renovations both before and after the supposed 'recent addition', mentioned above. These included rearranging the kitchen when power came in 1968 and rearranging it again when bach holders were forced to install an electric toilet in the mid 1970s (Richard Roberts pers comm 2001). The addition, which occurred in the 1960s, is incongruous with the squat stone bach but it also tells part of the story, just as surely as the other renovations do about dwelling in a bach. This also highlights the point that even those baches assumed unmodified have a far more complex history than is readily visible. Often the only truly original ones are

completely uninhabited, like bach 34 at Rotten Row which was identified by Evison and others but which has also been deserted for 30-40 years and has no contents (P.Hill pers comm). This raises the question of what authentic baches and bach settlements are?

For David Thom writing in 1973 the difference was primarily between houses that were proliferating in subdivisions along east coast beaches, and baches that were established far less formally. His suggestion that 'Perhaps the bach, one of our few 'folk buildings', was a transient expression that could not in any event have survived population growth and rising affluence' (Thom 1973:55) distinguishes the two forms in terms of their social organisation. He argued that the new suburbs by the sea reduced affordability but, '[Worse], this reduced the social mingling across geographic, social, occupational and income lines which had been part of the egalitarian way in the bach communities' (ibid). For Thom it is more the communities themselves that are authentic rather than any particular type of building.

Those opposed to the baches at Taylors Mistake, point to the existence of lawyers, architects and accountants among the bach holders and say they are no longer a reflection of 'the type of community that gave rise to the baches' (Evidence of R.Harris to Guthrie hearing 1993). In my opinion, this misses the point that Thom is making, which is that bach communities reflected a cross-section of society and it was precisely because wealthy and eminent people like Prime Ministers Gordon Coates and Robert Muldoon had baches, when they could have afforded mansions, that they were considered egalitarian. Assessing whether a community still exists at Taylors Mistake is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is safe to say that it definitely wont exist if there are only 4 baches retained, and it is likely to change if they are rebuilt on private property behind 'The Row'.

Ideas of authenticity are, however more usually seen to reside in individual buildings themselves. This approach lists the 'genuine' examples based on their unmodified appearance, and lack of habitation of the bach is seen as beneficial to its frozen in time status, and will continue if they become 'static museum pieces'. I would argue that this is a completely stifling approach to heritage, which has wider implications for heritage management. This model of authenticity denies any temporal dimension

to the baches. It is not the mere fact that they were built (although this may be an interesting story) that makes them important but the way they have allowed for an ongoing practical engagement with both their surroundings and interaction with other people. A bach that was built but then remained uninhabited may be an interesting object but it would have none of the historical associations, which may make particular bach landscapes worthy of preservation.

When we think of the authentic bach, it is more appropriate to think in terms of the custom of baching, rather than its 'frozen in time tradition'. Ongoing renovations, additions and maintenance with a wide variety of cheap and found materials were part of the custom of baching. They do not necessarily make a modified bach inauthentic if they were carried out in the general spirit of bach living. What does make the bach inauthentic is when modifications and renovations completely envelop the bach and it becomes a family home or holiday house.

#### **8.3 4 Landscape Setting and Relocation**

Historic places are first and foremost 'in place', the place itself is important when considering heritage. The events at Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto did not happen somewhere else they happened in very specific landscapes. To suggest that there are other similar settlements around the country and similar bach types is to completely miss the specificity of both the spatial and temporal dimensions of landscape.

Taylors Mistake was close enough to Christchurch to get there for weekends even before there was a road over from Sumner and before there were motorcars. That it remains is unusual, as many subsequent bach settlements near cities have become suburbs, with little to indicate their beginnings. Access to Rangitoto Island was only possible by boat; ferry, private launch or rowboat. The isolation but proximity of both these settlements helped to create the particular types of community that developed. For example, many of the bachholders at Taylors Mistake have had an ongoing involvement with surf life saving club since its inception in 1917 (Cairns and Turpin 1993). The deceptiveness of the beach and its popularity has meant a high number of rescues, but it is the particular configurations of place that have created this history, it could not have happened anywhere else.



A place sits within a broader landscape but the patterns of baches and spaces around them, also creates a particular landscape. The current pattern of the baches is indicative of an era when it was possible for the Mayor of Sumner Borough Council to visit the cave baches in 1910, and 'on the whole found nothing objectionable' (in Marquet 1998) and agreed to issue licences for existing and future baches. The vast majority of the remaining baches at Taylors Mistake and Rangitoto Island, were in fact legally established, but it appears that this is an era of New Zealand's history that many environmentalists would prefer didn't exist.

The importance of setting to any particular heritage buildings varies although it is nearly always important, I would argue that it is particularly important in the case of bach landscapes not only because their setting is in a particular location but also because the surroundings of most baches are integral to their usage. Cook (2002) argues that the way we have used the areas surrounding the bach is a uniquely New Zealand characteristic, and it predates current ideas of al fresco living by several decades. Often more time was spent in the bach surroundings than in the bach itself.

The idea that heritage buildings can be relocated is only regarded as a last resort and for the reasons I have discussed is a highly inappropriate way to deal with baches. This is because both the setting they are removed from is destroyed without creating a desirable place afterwards, and the setting where they are relocated to is altered. At Taylors Mistake, the proposal to allow relocation or rebuilding on to private land behind existing baches on 'The Row' will completely change the setting. It is not so much that the buildings will be in different places or be built, as replicas that will change the character, as it is the change of tenure. This will create private spaces both around the new baches and between them and the currently existing ones. This will change the character of the baches on 'The Row' depleting their value as buildings built on public land that relate to each other and the landscape rather than property boundaries. (Athfield 1998)

#### **8.4 Managing Bach Heritage**

There are three main options that have been proposed for the ongoing management of bach settlements. These are; the removal of most of the baches with key ones retained as museums, the scheduling of some baches with continued family use while

some are demolished and allowed to relocate or rebuilt on private property, and the bach ownership taken over by some form of trust which allows public usage. These options are informed to a greater or lesser degree by different intellectual perspectives on heritage and the exigencies of the controlling authority.

While DoC's preference for bach museums on Rangitoto clearly reflects a fine arts perspective on heritage, it also highlights an organisation that was more worried by the fiscal implications and potential rather than actual ecological impacts. In some respects the patterns of the landscape had already been significantly destroyed by the removal of over 60 baches, but this is not the case at Taylors Mistake.

While the cave baches were demolished in 1979, the pattern of the remaining settlements at Taylors Mistake is largely similar to how it appeared in the 1920s or 1930s, apart from several baches in Hobsons Bay destroyed by rock-fall, fire or storm. Nearly all the baches have had additions and renovations or even been rebuilt but they have retained the pattern of initial establishment. Any attempt to choose only the best examples of the bach to retain as museums will destroy this wider landscape as well as the idea of a living functioning building.

The idea of allowing public usage of buildings on public land appeals to many people, because the buildings are theoretically 'saved' and their potential usage is broadened. There are, however, significant difficulties with this type of proposal, including who administers them and how they are maintained. The proposal of Rangitoto Island Historic Conservation Trust alleviates some of these problems but it also diminishes the heritage value of the buildings, which is, in part, related to the ongoing involvement of particular families with each of the baches.

This involvement is uniquely related to the contents of the baches. As we have seen baches become repositories for all manner of family items which have outlived their usefulness elsewhere, but are collected together at the bach. These may seem trivial but they are an integral part of the character of the bach. The generational continuity of the bach significantly enriches the heritage of the bach, but is lost when they are publicly owned.

These issues are largely overcome if the baches continue in family ownership as scheduled activities but again the issue of fairness is raised. The feeling that

bachholders have received something for nothing, or next to nothing, combines with feelings about the environmental impacts of the baches to create the perception that bach settlements on public land should no longer be tolerated. For some people the solution is removal, with perhaps a few as museums. I would argue that this is a flawed conception of heritage and it is time to try to solve these dilemmas creatively rather than reactively. My conclusions address both the way heritage should be understood in terms of landscape and suggests one possible creative solution for Taylors Mistake.

## **8.5 Conclusions**

This dissertation raises both theoretical issues about the identification and assessment of heritage landscapes, which inform practical concerns about their ongoing management I shall address these issues in turn.

### **8.5.1 Theoretical Implications**

This research has highlighted different intellectual perspectives towards heritage and investigated how those perspectives deal with bach landscapes that form a significant part of New Zealand's social and environmental history. The prevailing fine arts or art historical perspective concentrates on the building itself treating it as though it were a historical document, hence modifications and usage are seen to degrade the buildings heritage value. It privileges pretty, old buildings designed by famous people and consequently finds little merit in vernacular buildings that are modified as funds and materials become available and completely fails to see the creativity of owners as an important part of what makes 'a bach'. This perspective may value a bach if someone famous lived there or an historic event happened there but it often fails to consider historical continuity of ownership and the broader aspects of social and environmental history, unless they happened a long time ago.

These failings becomes systematic when supposedly 'rigorous' assessment approaches are adopted if, as is the case with the Auckland City Council Evaluation Sheet, they prioritise the building and important people and events over social history and the landscape. This bias is compounded when the assessor's way of seeing heritage is through a fine arts perspective that values builder built baches ahead of the

organically evolving bach. It is possible to interpret the alterations of a bach as part of its social history, where each modification signifies an event in the life of the building and the family but the fine arts perspective sees them in terms of style rather than social history.

A humanities perspective conversely concentrates on what a particular place or landscape can tell us about the past, focussing on the meanings that buildings and places can convey. From this perspective the baches represent a part of New Zealand's social history when increasing mobility allowed people to leave the cities and inland areas to go on holiday. They are also a tangible reminder of a time now long gone when it was possible to load a truck with timber and head to an unvisited part of the coast and build a bach.

Both the Rangitoto Island and Taylors Mistake baches also tell stories about environmental disputes and the way conservation and heritage thinking is changing. At both places, baches were demolished, at Taylors Mistake because they were considered a health risk, while on Rangitoto they offended the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park Board's idea of what the park should be. George Farrant noted of the Rangitoto baches 'Whatever conclusion is reached, it will be an accurate barometer of the state of balance between the conservation of New Zealand's natural versus man-made heritage estate' (1999:15).

The same could be said of Taylors Mistake, but it has to be recognised that conclusions are always provisional and open to re-litigation. While this version of the social and environmental history of the 'Bach' is gaining wider acceptance including the Christchurch City Council's heritage planner, it still only tells part of the story of why baches are important, because it often lacks a strong understanding of the landscape dimensions of places.

The third perspective, which Warren-Findley outlines, is a holistic environmental perspective, which attempts to reconcile natural and cultural heritage. This is of course easier said than done, partly because of the stronger emphasis on natural heritage in New Zealand but also because particular concepts like historic, environment, setting and landscape often entail certain ways of seeing or thinking. Setting and landscape are typically characterised as surface patterns that are viewed

by sight alone. Understanding landscapes in terms of dwelling on the other hand emphasises the embedded and embodied experience of landscape, that is an 'enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it and so doing have left there something of themselves' (Ingold 2000:189).

The holistic environmental perspective would also recognise the stories of those who came before the bach holders. Maori voices have been conspicuously absent from the hearings about Taylors Mistake, but they clearly used the place for mahinga kai, and there is moahunter archaeological site beneath the toilet block, in the middle of the beach ( HPT Archaeologist pers comm).

This approach recognises the power that particular places and landscapes have to create an indelible memories and at least in part explains why the bachholders at Rangitoto Island, and Taylors Mistake and other places go to such lengths to retain their baches.

The increasingly common representations of the bach in various media may also contribute to the rising popularity of bach landscapes, because experiences are also influenced by imaginative geographies of the bach.

Opponents of the baches also have both embodied experiences of the landscape and their own imaginative geographies. They may be influenced by direct experiences of meetings with bachholders, which combine, with ideas of property rights, public access and natural heritage, which all powerfully structure the way many New Zealanders feel about landscapes. Reconciling the deeply held feelings about bachholders on public land is no easy matter but it is worth suggesting one possible solution for Taylors Mistake.

### **8.5.2 Practical Matters: A Suggestion for Future Management at Taylors Mistake**

Both Commissioner Marquet and the Environment Court supported the Mediated Solution but said that providing for the baches that were to be scheduled under the RMA 1991 did not mean those baches should stay or go. That matter was entirely at the discretion of the Christchurch City Council. I would argue that the 'Mediated Solution' is now ten years old and significantly fails to reflect recent thinking about heritage values and failed to attempt a creative solution. The limited increases in

public access do not justify the significant reductions in heritage value and fail to address concerns about exclusive private use of public land.

The baches should be left where they are and have existed for many years; they form a unique landscape in New Zealand, which can be richly interpreted. They highlight a particular era in New Zealand's history and illustrate changing perceptions about cultural and natural heritage and a crucial aspect of that heritage is the bachholders and their forebears who created the landscape that exists today.

But, and this is a very big but, the bachholders need to recognise that exclusive private use is intolerable to some (or perhaps many) people. I therefore propose that the bachholders unite to create a proposal that returns something to the community rather than uniting to fight their opponents.

Several of the bachholders have given evidence that they have allowed their baches to be used by disadvantaged kids or young members of the surf club. What I propose is that these types of gesture are formalised into the Taylors Mistake Charitable Trust. I imagine that his proposal would allow the bachholders to retain an interest in the baches but that it would also allow others to use the baches. Who those others might be and the ratio of usage would no doubt be contentious matters, but the recuperative power of living at the bach does suggest some possible examples; those living with terminal or mental illness and people unable to afford a holiday. People might also go in a lottery and pay to stay in a bach and that rent could be put towards maintenance.

The current situation where some baches are rented for most of the year is good in one sense, because the buildings are being used but it also exacerbates the feeling of unfairness and under the type of proposal would not be allowed to happen. Some people are unlikely to be satisfied by this type of proposal but I am sure many more would have fewer reservations about the baches continuing to stay.

Inevitably, it would also take quite a bit of work by the bachholders to make this sort of concept work in reality and they would not have the convenience of being able to go to their bach whenever they felt like it. But it might also allow the community to come together to celebrate the happy accident of the baches rather than being divided by them.

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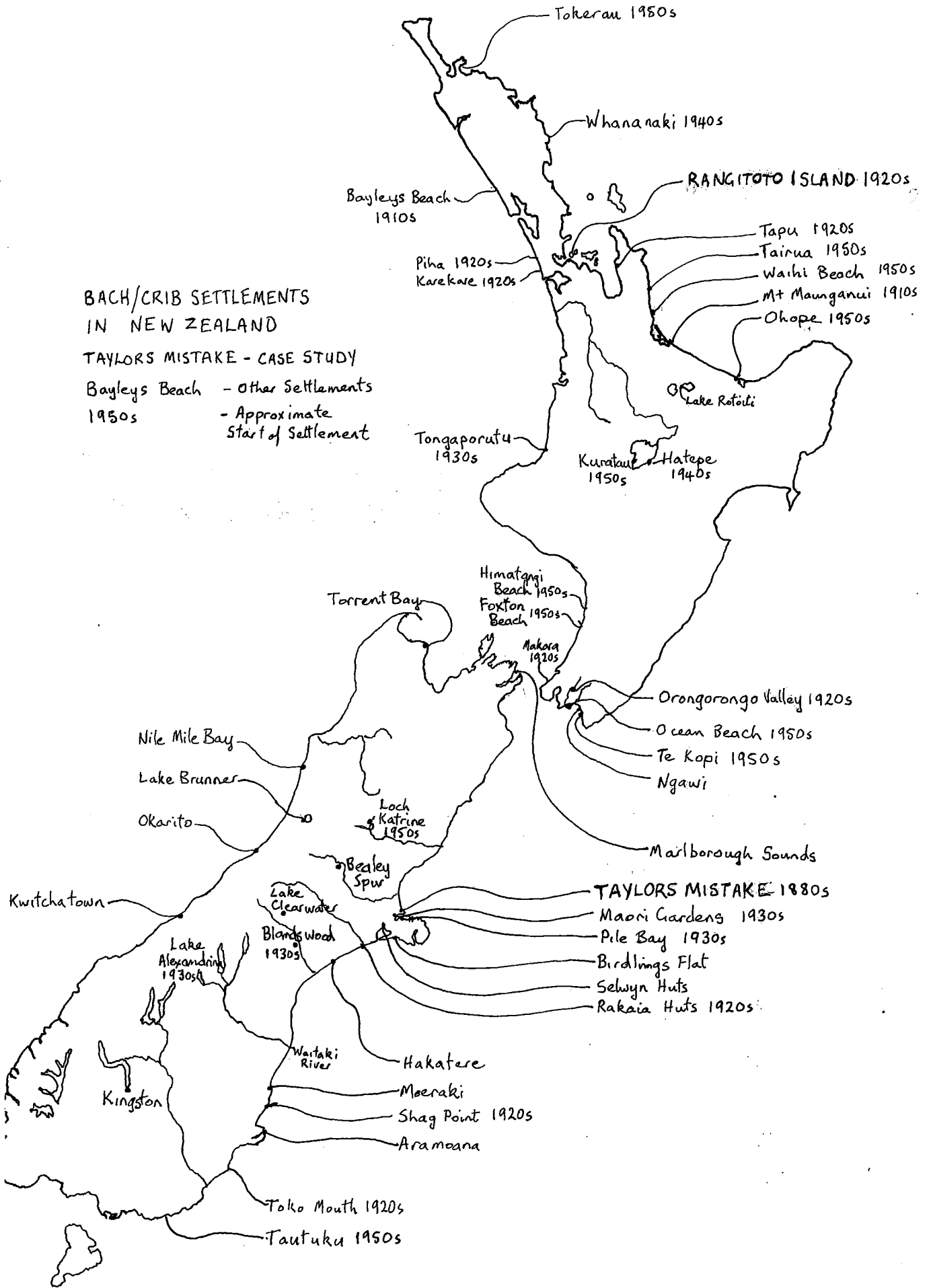
Snoep, O. (2002 )- Referrer



BACH/CRIB SETTLEMENTS  
IN NEW ZEALAND

TAYLORS MISTAKE - CASE STUDY

Bayleys Beach - Other Settlements  
1950s - Approximate  
Start of Settlement



TAYLORS MISTAKE 1880s

- Maori Gardens 1930s
- Pile Bay 1930s
- Birdlings Flat
- Selwyn Huts
- Rakaia Huts 1920s

HGI

**EVALUATION SHEET****AUCKLAND CITY HAURAKI GULF ISLAND - HERITAGE OBJECT, FEATURE, OR PLACE**

|                            |  |                       |                  |  |  |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------|--|--|
| Name(s)                    |  |                       |                  |  |  |
| Address                    |  | Rangitoto Wharf Group | Rangitoto Island |  |  |
| Unique ACC Identity Number |  |                       |                  |  |  |

| PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS                   |   |             |         |         |           |        | TOTALS    |
|--|---|-------------|---------|---------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| <b>A</b> Style                             | New Zealand bungalow  | 40          | 20      | 10      | 5         | 0      | 0         |
|  |   | U           | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>B</b> Construction                      |   | 30          | 15      | 8       | 4         | 0      | 0         |
|  |   | U           | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>C</b> Age                               |   | 20          | 10      | 5       | 2         | 0      | 0         |
|  |   | before 1839 | 1840-59 | 1860-79 | 1880-1913 | 1914 + |           |
| <b>D</b> Architect/<br>Designer/Originator | Watson Brothers   | 16          | 8       | 4       | 2         | 0      | 2         |
|  |   | U           | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>E</b> Design                            | Bungalow - pure style inside & out<br>Out-buildings & boatsheds           | 16          | 8       | 4       | 2         | 0      | 4         |
|  |   | U           | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>F</b> Interior                          | Bungalow style - & intact<br>stove niche                                  | 8           | 4       | 2       | 1         | 0      | 1         |
|  |   | U           | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| HISTORY, PEOPLE/EVENTS/ASSOCIATIONS        |   |             |         |         |           |        | TOTALS    |
| <b>G</b> Personnel                         | Continuous ownership by family  |             | 50      | 25      | 10        | 0      | 10        |
|  |   |             | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>H</b> Events                            |   |             | 45      | 20      | 10        | 0      | 0         |
|  |   |             | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>I</b> Social Context                    | Evocative of the unique Rangitoto<br>residential & recreational community | 40          | 20      | 10      | 0         | 0      | 20        |
|  |   |             | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| ENVIRONMENT                                |   |             |         |         |           |        | TOTALS    |
| <b>J</b> Continuity                        |   |             | 5       | 3       | 2         | 0      | 2         |
|  |   |             | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>K</b> Physical Context<br>(setting)     |   |             | 3       | 2       | 1         | 0      | 1         |
|  |   |             | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>L</b> Landmark Quality                  |   | 10          | 5       | 3       | 2         | 0      | 0         |
|  |   | U           | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
| <b>M</b> Group Significance                | Key member of main Rangitoto<br>Wharf group                               | 16          | 8       | 4       | 2         | 0      | 8         |
|  |   | E           | S       | M       | D         | N      |           |
| INTEGRITY                                  |   |             |         |         |           |        | TOTALS    |
| <b>N</b> Site                              | On original site  |             | 10      | 5       | 0         | -5     | 10        |
|  |   |             | E       | S       | M         | L      |           |
| <b>O</b> Changes:                          |   |             | E       | S       | M         | N      |           |
|  | Form  | 4           | 2       | 1       | 0         | 0      | 2         |
|  | Materials   | 4           | 2       | 1       | 0         | 0      | 2         |
|  | Added exterior lean-to  | 4           | 2       | 1       | 0         | 0      | 4         |
|  | Added corrugated iron lean-to   | 4           | 2       | 1       | 0         | 0      | 2         |
|  | Painted original wallpaper  | 4           | 2       | 1       | 0         | 0      | 2         |
|  | Surround  | 4           | 2       | 1       | 0         | 0      | 2         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                               |   |             |         |         |           |        | <b>70</b> |

Evaluated by: Tony Barnes

22-Oct-98

Reviewed by: George Farrant

Signature: 

Comments:

| Recommendation   |          |          |           |
|------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Schedule: yes/no | Category | Interior | Surrounds |
|                  |          |          |           |